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**Robin Hood's
garland**

Derby

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BEING
A COMPLETE HISTORY
OF ALL THE
CLEVER AND MERRY EXPLOITS
PERFORMED BY HIM AND HIS MEN;
CONTAINING
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS
BIRTH, LIFE, AND DEATH.

Embellished with Engravings.

DERBY:
PUBLISHED BY THOMAS RICHARDSON;
SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL, LONDON.

Price Sixpence.



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ROBIN HOOD'S GARLAND.

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KIND gentlemen, will you be patient awhile?

Ay, and then you shall hear anon,
A very good ballad of bold Robin Hood,
And of his brave man Little John.

In Locksley town in Nottinghamshire,
In merry sweet Locksley town,
There Robin Hood was born and bred,
Bold Robin of famous renown.

The father of Robin a forester was,
And he shot with a trusty long bow,
Two north-country miles and an inch in a shot,
As the Pindar of Wakefield does know;

For he brought Adam Bell, and Clim of the Clough,
With Willaim of Clowdellee,
To shoot with our forester for forty marks,
But our forester beat them all three.

His mother was niece to the Coventry knight,
Which Warwickshire men call Sir Guy;
And he slew the great boar, whose head's at the door,
Or mine host at the Bell tells a lie.

Her brother was Gamwell of great Gamwell-hall,
A noble housekeeper was he,
As ever broke bread in blithe Nottinghamshire,
And a 'squire of famous degree.

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The mother of Robin said to her husband,
My honey, my love, and my dear,
Let Robin and I ride this morning to Gamwell,
To taste of my brother's good cheer.

Thy boon it is granted, my dear, gentle Joan,
Take one of my horses, I pray ;
The sun it is rising, and therefore make haste,
For to-morrow is Christmas-day.

Then Robin Hood's father's grey gelding was brought,
And saddled and bridled was he ;
God-wot ! his blue bonnet, his new suit of clothes,
And a cloak that reach'd down to his knee.

She put on her holiday kirtle and gown,
They were of a light Lincoln green ;
The cloth was home-spun, but, for colour and make,
It might have beseemed a queen.

And when Robin put on his basket-hilt sword,
And his dagger on the other side,
He said, My dear mother, let's haste and begone,
We have twenty long miles for to ride.

On the gelding they mounted, and rode o'er the moor,
With their neighbour's good will, one and all ;
And then Robin gallop'd and never gave o'er,
Till they alighted at Gamwell-hall.

And now you may think the right worshipful 'squire
Was joyous his sister to see ;
For he kissed her so often, and swore a great oath,
Thou art welcome, dear sister, to me.

Next morning, when mass had been said in the chapel,
Six tables were plac'd in the hall ;
And in came the 'squire, who made a short speech,
It was, Neighbours, you're welcome all.

But not a man here shall taste my March beer,
Till a Christmas carol be sung :
Then all clapt their hands, and shouted and sung,
Till the hall and the parlour it rung.

Then gammon and fowl, roast beef and plum-pudding,
Were set upon every table,
And noble George Gamwell said, Eat and be merry,
And drink too as long as you're able.

When dinner was ended, the chaplain said grace,
And be merry, my friends, said the 'squire ;
It rains, and it blows, but call for more ale,
And lay some more wood on the fire.

He then told the butler John Little to call,
(Little John was a sturdy, stout lad,)
At gamblings, and jugglings, and twenty fine tricks,
He would make you both merry and glad.

When Little John came, to gambols they went,
Both gentlemen, yeomen, and clown ;
And what do you think ? why, as sure as I live,
Bold Robin Hood put them all down.

And now you may think the right worshipful 'squire
Was joyous this sight for to see ;
For he said, Cousin Robin, thou go'st no more home,
But tarry and dwell here with me.

Thou shalt have my land when I die, and till then
Thou shalt be the staff of my age.
Then grant me a boon, dear uncle, said Robin,
That John Little be my page.

And he said, Kind cousin, I grant thee thy boon,
With all my heart so let it be ;
Then come here, Little John, said bold Robin Hood,
Come hither, my page, unto me.

Go fetch me my bow, my longest bent bow,
And broad arrows two or three ;
For since 'tis fair weather we'll into Sherwood,
Some merry pastime for to see.

When Robin Hood came into merry Sherwood,
He winded his bugle so clear,
And twice five and twenty good yeomen bold,
Before Robin Hood did appear.

Where are your companions ? said bold Robin Hood,
For still I want forty and three ;
Then said Little John, yonder they stand
All under the Greenwood tree.

As that word was spoken, Clorinda came by,
The queen of the shepherds was she ;
Her gown was of velvet, as green as the grass,
And her buskin did reach to her knee.

Her gait it was graceful, her body was straight,
And her countenance was free from pride ;
A bow in her hand, and a quiver of arrows
Hung pendent all by her sweet side.

Her eyebrows were black, and so was her hair,
And her skin was as smooth as glass ;
Her visage spake wisdom and modesty too,
For she was a beautiful lass.

Says Robin, fair lady, oh, whither away,
Oh, whither fair lady, away ?
She made him an answer, To kill a fat buck,
For to-morrow is Tithury day.

Then Robin Hood said, Lady, wander with me,
A little to yonder green bower,
There sit down to rest you, and you shall be sure,
Of a brace or a leash in an hour.

And as they were going towards the green bower,
Two hundred fat bucks they espied ;
She chose out the fattest there was in the herd,
And she shot him through side and side.

By the faith of my body: says bold Robin Hood,
I never saw woman like thee,
And com'st thou from east, or com'st thou from west,
Thou need'st not beg venison of me.

However along to my hower you shall go,
And taste of a forester's meat ;
And when she came there, she found as good cheer,
As any one need for to eat.

Clorinda then said, Tell your name, gentle Sir ;
He said, It is bold Robin Hood,
'Squire Gamwell's my uncle, but all my delight
Is to dwell in merry Sherwood.

For 'tis a fine life, 'tis void of all strife ;
So 'tis, Sir, Clorinda reply'd ;
But, O ! said bold Robin, how sweet would it be
If Clorinda would be my bride !

She blush'd at the notion, yet, after a pause,
Said, Yes, Sir, and with all my heart ;
Then let's send for a priest, said bold Robin Hood,
And be married before we do part.

It cannot be so, gentle Sir, said she,
For I must be at Titbury feast ;
But if Robin Hood will go thither with me,
I'll make him the most welcome guest.

Said Robin Hood, Reach me that buck, Little John,
For I'll go along with my dear ;
Go bid my yeomen kill six brace just as fat,
And meet me to-morrow near here.

Before he had rode five Staffordshire miles
Eight yeomen that were too bold,
Bid bold Robin stand, and deliver his buck—
A truer tale never was told.

I will not, said Robin ; come here, Little John,
Stand by me, and we'll beat them all. [em,
Then both drew their swords, and cut 'em and slash'd.
That five of the eight did fall.

The three that remain'd call'd to Robin for quarter,
And Little John begged their lives ;
They entered Titbury, and then went to dinner
With the towns-people and their wives.

When dinner was ended, Sir Roger, the parson
Of Dubbride, was sent for in haste ;
He brought his mass book, and bid them take hands,
And he joined them in marriage full fast.

And then as bold Robin Hood and his sweet bride,
Went hand in hand to the green bower,
The birds sung with pleasure in merry Sherwood,
For it was a most joyful hour.

When Robin came within sight of the bower,
Where are my brave yeomen ? said he ;
Little John answer'd, Yonder they stand,
All under the Greenwood tree.

Garlands they brought by two and by three,
And plac'd them on the bride's head ;
The music struck up, and they all fell to dancing
Till the bride and the bridegroom were a-bed.

What they did there must conceal'd be by me,
Because they lay long the next day.
Having wished them both joy, and got a good piece
Of the bride-cake, I then went away.

But now, alas ! I'd forgotten to tell ye,
That married they were with a ring ;
So will all chaste girls, or be buried as maids ;
Now let us pray for the king,
That he may have children, and he may have more,
To govern and do us some good ;
Then I'll make some ballads in Robin Hood's bower,
And sing them in merry Sherwood.

Robin Hood's Journey to Nottingham.

Robin Hood was a tall young man,
Full twenty winters old ;
Robin Hood was a proper young man,
Of courage stout and bold.
Robin Hood went to Nottingham,
With the general for to dine ;
There did he find fifteen foresters,
Drinking beer, ale, and wine.
What news ? what news ? said bold Robin Hood,
The news I fain would know ?
Our king hath provided a shooting match—
Then I am ready with my bow.
We hold it in scorn, said the foresters,
That ever a thing so young,
Should bear a bow at a shooting match,
That's not able to draw one string.
I'll hold you ten pounds, said bold Robin Hood,
By the leave of our lady,
That I hit the mark a hundred rod,
And I'll cause a hart to die.
We'll hold you ten pounds, said the foresters,
By the leave of our lady,
Thou hit'st not the mark a hundred rod,
Nor cause the hart to die.
Robin Hood bent up a noble good bow,
And a broad arrow he let fly :
He hit the mark a hundred rod,
And caus'd the hart to die.
Some say, he broke ribs one or two,
And some say, he broke three :

The arrow in the hart would not abide,
But wounded two or three.

The hart did skip, and the hart did leap
And the hart lay on the ground :
The wager is mine, said Robin Hood,
If 'twere for a thousand pound.

The wager's not thine, said the foresters,
Altho' thou be'st in haste ;
Take up thy bow, and get thee hence,
Lest we thy sides do baste.

Then Robin took up his noble good bow,
And his broad arrows amain ;
And Robin being pleas'd, began for to smile
As he went over the plain.

Then Robin bent his noble good bow,
And his broad arrows let fly,
'Till fourteen of the fifteen foresters
Upon the ground did lie.

He that the quarrel did first begin,
Went tripping o'er the plain ;
But Robin Hood bent his noble good bow,
And fetch'd him back again.

You said I was no archer, quoth Robin Hood,
But say not so now again ;
Then his bow he bent, and an arrow he sent,
Which split his head in twain.

You have found me an archer, says Robin Hood,
Which will make your wives for to wring,
And wish that you had never spoke the word,
That I could not draw one string.

The people that liv'd in fair Nottingham,
Came running out amain,
Supposing to have taken bold Robin Hood,
With the foresters who were slain.

Some lost legs, and some lost arms,
And some did lose their blood ;
But Robin he took up his noble good bow,
And he's gone to the merry Green Wood.

Robin Hood and the Pindar of Wakefield.

IN Wakefield there liv'd a jolly pindar,
In Wakefield on the Green ;
He was stout and bold, just thirty years old,
And comely to be seen.

This pindar car'd not for 'squire or knight,
Nor even barons so bold ;
Whoe'er did trespass on Wakefield town,
Their pledge he sent to the pinfold.

Now this being told to three young men,
Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John,
They travell'd along till they saw the pindar,
As he sat under a thorn.

Now turn, said the pindar, now turn again,
For a wrong way you have gone ;
You have forsaken the king's highway,
And made a path over the corn.

That would be a shame, said jolly Robin,
We being three, and you but one :
The pindar leapt back thirty good feet,
'Twas thirty good feet and one.

He lean'd his back against an oak tree,
And his foot against a stone,
And there he fought them a summer's day,
And a summer's day so long.

Bold Robin, at length, cried, Hold thy hand,
We'll fight no longer this day,
For he is worthy to join my band ;
And thus to the pindar did say :

Now wilt thou forsake thy pindar's craft,
And live in the Green Wood with me ;
At Michaelmas next my covenant comes,
When ev'ry man gathers his fee.

Said the pindar, If that was come and gone,
And my master had paid me my fee,
Then would I set as little by him,
As my master doth set by me.

O, wilt thou forsake thy pindar's craft,
And go to the Green Wood with me ?

Thou shalt have a livery twice in a year,
 The best that ever you'll see.
 Then away they went to merry Sherwood,
 To live happy in Robin Hood's bower ;
 And they all did declare, and solemnly swear,
 To stand firm by each other for ever.



Robin Hood and the Bishop.

Come, gentlemen all, and listen awhile,
 And a story to you I'll unfold ;
 I'll tell you how Robin Hood serv'd the bishop,
 When he robb'd him of his gold.
 As it fell out, on a sun-shiny day,
 When Phœbus was in his prime,
 Bold Robin Hood, that archer good,
 In mirth would spend some time.
 And as he walked the forest along,
 Some pastime for to espy,
 There he was aware of a proud bishop,
 And all his company.
 Oh ! what shall I do, said Robin Hood then,
 If the bishop he should take me ?
 No mercy he'll show, unto me I know,
 Therefore, away I'll flee.
 Then Robin being shy, turn'd slyly about,
 And a little house there did spy ;

And to an old wife, to spare his life,
He aloud began to cry.

Why, who art thou? said the old woman,
Come tell to me for good.

I am an outlaw, as many do know,
My name it is Robin Hood:

And yonder's the bishop, and all his men,
And if that I taken be,
Then day and night he'll work me spite,
And hanged I shall be.

If thou be Robin Hood, said the old woman,
As thou dost seem to be,
I'll for thee provide, thy person to hide,
From the bishop and his company;

For I remember, one Saturday night,
Thou brought'st me both shoes and hose;
Therefore I'll provide, thy person to hide,
And keep thee from thy foes.

Then give me soon thy coat of grey,
And take thou my mantle of green;
Thy spindle and twine unto me resign,
And take thou my arrows so keen.

And when Robin Hood was thus array'd,
He went straight towards his company;
With the spindle and twine, he oft look'd behind,
From the bishop that he might flee.

Oh! who is yonder, quoth Little John,
That now comes over the lee?
An arrow at her I'll let off anon,
So like an old witch looks she.

Hold hands, hold hands! said Robin Hood then,
And shoot not thy arrows so keen:
I am Robin Hood, thy master good,
As quickly shall be seen.

The bishop he came to the old woman's house,
And call'd in a furious mood,
Come let me see, and bring unto me,
The traitor Robin Hood.

The old woman he set on a milk-white steed,
Himself on his dapple grey ;
And for joy he had got bold Robin Hood,
He went laughing all the way.

But as they were riding the forest along,
The bishop he chanc'd for to see
A hundred brave bowmen, stout and bold,
Stand under the Greenwood tree.

Oh ! who is yonder, the bishop then said,
That's ranging within yonder wood ?
Marry, says the old woman, I think it be
A man called Robin Hood.

Why, who art thou, the bishop then said,
Which I have here with me ?
Why I am a woman, thou cuckoldy bishop,
Lift up my leg and see.

Then woe is me, the bishop he said,
That ever I saw this day !
He turn'd him about, but Robin Hood stout,
Call'd him, and bid him to stay.

Then Robin took hold of the bishop's horse,
And tied him fast to a tree ;
Then Little John smil'd his master upon,
For joy of his company.

Then Robin Hood took his cloak from his back,
And spread it upon the ground,
And out of the bishop's portmantua
He told five hundred pound.

Now let him go, said bold Robin Hood ;
Quoth Little John, that must not be,
For I vow and protest he shall sing us a mass,
Before that he goes from me.

Then Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,
And bound him fast to a tree,
And made him sing a mass, God wot,
To him and his yeomanry.

'Twas then they brought him through the wood,
And set him on his dapple grey,
They gave him the tail within his hand,
And bid him for Robin Hood pray.

Robin Hood and the Butcher.

Come, all you brave gallants, and listen awhile,
That are this bower within,
For of Robin Hood, that archer good,
A song I intend to sing.

Upon a time it chanced so,
Bold Robin in the forest did spy
A jolly butcher, with a fine young mare,
With his flesh towards the market to hie.

Good morrow, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
What food hast thou? tell unto me—
Thy trade to me tell, and where thou dost dwell,
For I like well thy company.

The butcher then answer'd bold Robin Hood,
No matter where I dwell;
But a butcher I am, and to Nottingham
I am going my flesh to sell.

What's the price of thy flesh? said jolly Robin,
Come tell it unto me;
And the price of thy mare, be she ever so dear,
For a butcher I fain would be!

The price of my flesh, the butcher reply'd,
I will soon tell unto thee;
With my bonny mare, they are not too dear,
Four marks thou must give unto me.

Four marks I will give thee, said jolly Robin,
Four marks shall be thy fee;
The money come count, and let me mount,
For a butcher I fain would be.

Now Robin he is to Nottingham gone,
His butcher's trade to begin;
With a good intent to the sheriff he went,
And there he took up his inn.

When the other butchers did open their shops,
Bold Robin he then begun;
Yet how for to sell he knew not well,
For in selling he was but young.

When the other butchers no meat could sell,
Robin Hood got both gold and fee;

For he sold more meat for one penny,
Than others could do for three.

But when Robin sold his meat so fast,
No butcher by him could thrive,
For he sold more meat for one penny,
Than others could do for five.

Which made the butchers of Nottingham
To study as they did stand,
Saying, Surely he is some prodigal
That has sold his father's land.

The butchers stepp'd up to jolly Robin
Acquainted with him to be;
Come, brother, one said, we be all one trade,
Now, will you go dine with me?

Accurs'd be his heart, said jolly Robin,
That a butcher will deny;
I will go with you, my brethren true,
As fast as I can hie.

But when they to the sheriff's house came,
To dinner they hied apace,
And Robin Hood he the man must be,
Before them all to say grace.

Pray God bless us all, said jolly Robin,
And the meat within this place;
A cup of good sack will strengthen our back,
And so I end my grace.

Come fill us more wine, said jolly Robin,
Let's be merry while we do stay,
For wine and good cheer, be it ever so dear,
I vow I the reck'ning will pay.

Come, brothers, be merry, said jolly Robin,
Let's drink, and never give o'er,
For the shot I will pay, ere I go away,
If it cost me five pounds and more.

This is a mad blade, the butchers then said;
Says the sheriff he's some prodigal,
Who some land hath sold for silver and gold,
And now he doth mean to spend all.

Hast thou any horn'd beasts, the sheriff, then said,
Good fellow, to sell to me?

Yes, that I have, good master shrieve,

I have hundred two or three ;

And a hundred acres of good free land,

If you please it for to see ;

And I'll make unto you a title as true,

As ever my father did me.

The sheriff he saddled his brown palfrey,

And took five hundred pounds in gold,

And away he went, with a good intent,

The horned beasts to behold.

Away then the sheriff and Robin did ride,

To the forest of merry Sherwood,

Then sheriff did say, God preserve us this day

From a man they call Robin Hood !

But when that a little further they came,

Bold Robin Hood he chanc'd to spy

An hundred head of good fat deer,

Came tripping the sheriff full nigh.

How like you my horn'd beasts, good master sheriff ?

They be fat and fair to see ;

I tell thee, good fellow, I would I were gone,

For I like not thy company.

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,

And blew out blasts just three ;

Then quickly anon there came Little John,

And all his brave company.

Your will, my brave master ? then said little John,

I pray come tell unto me.

I have brought hither the sheriff of Nottingham

This day to dine with thee.

He is welcome to me, then said Little John,

I hope he will honestly pay :

I know he has gold, if it were but well told,

Will serve us to drink a whole day.

Then Robin Hood took his cloak from his back,

And laid it upon the ground,

And out of the sheriff's portmanteau

He told five hundred pound.

Then Robin he brought him through the wood,

And set him on his brown palfrey ;

O have me commended when your journey's ended,

So Robin went laughing away.

Robin Hood and the Tanner.

In Nottingham a tanner there liv'd,
 And his name was Arthur-a-Bland,
 There was never a 'squire in Nottinghamshire
 Dare bid bold Arthur to stand.

With a long staff upon his shoulder,
 So well he could clear his way,
 By two and by three he made them to flee,
 For they had no list to stay.

And as he went forth one summer's morning,
 To the forest of merry Sherwood,
 To view the red deer, that run here and there,
 There met he bold Robin Hood.

As soon as bold Robin did him espy,
 He thought he some sport would make,
 Therefore out of hand he bid him to stand,
 And thus unto him did spake :

Why, who art thou, thou bold fellow,
 Who rangest so boldly here?
 In sooth, to be brief, thou lookest like a thief,
 That's come to steal our king's deer.

For I am a keeper in this forest,
 The king puts me in trust,
 To look to the deer, that run here and there,
 Therefore stop thee I must.

If thou be'st a keeper in this forest,
And hast such great command,
Yet you must have more partakers in store,
Before you make me to stand.

No, I have no more partakers in-store,
Nor any that I do need,
But my arrows and bow, and my sword also
I know they will do the deed.

For thy sword and thy bow, I care not a straw,
Nor all thy arrows to boot,
If I give thee one knock upon thy bare scop,
Thou canst as well sh—t as shoot.

Speak cleanly, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
And give better terms unto me ;
Else I'll thee correct for thy neglect,
And make thee more mannerly.

Marry gap, with a wanton, quoth Arthur-a-Bland,
Art thou such a goodly man !

I care not a fig for thy looking so big,
Mend yourself wherever you can.

Then Robin Hood unbuckled his belt,
And laid down his bow so long ;
He took up a staff of another oak craft,
That was both stiff and strong.

I yield to thy weapon, said jolly Robin,
Since thou can't make match unto mine,
For this is a staff of another oak craft,
Not half a foot longer than thine.

But yet let us measure, said jolly Robin,
Before we begin the fray ;
For I will not have mine to be longer than thine,
For that will be counted foul play.

I care not for length, bold Arthur reply'd,
My staff is of oak so free ;
Eight feet and a half, it will knock down a calf,
And I hope it will knock down thee.

Then Robin he could no longer forbear,
But gave him a very good knock ;
And quickly and soon the blood it ran down,
Before it was ten of the clock.

Then Arthur again recovering himself,
Gave Robin a knock on the crown,
That from every side of Robin Hood's head,
The blood ran trickling down.

Then Robin he raged like a wild boar,
As soon as he saw his blood :
But Bland was in haste, he laid on so fast,
As if he'd been cleaving of wood.

And about, and about, and about they went,
Like two wild boars in a chace,
Striving to aim each other to maim,
Leg or arm, or any one place.

And knock for knock they lustily dealt,
Which held for two hours or more,
That all the wood rang at every bang,
They play'd their parts so sore.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
And let thy quarrel fall,
For here we may thrash our bones to mash,
And get no coin at all.

And in the forest of merry Sherwood,
Hereafter thou shalt be free.
God ha' mercy for nought ! my freedom I bought,
I may thank my good staff and not thee.

What tradesman art thou ? said jolly Robin,
Good fellow, I prithee me show ;
And also me tell, in what place you dwell,
For both these I fain would know.

I am a tanner, bold Arthur reply'd,
In Nottingham long I have wrought,
And if thou'lt come there, I vow and I swear,
I'll tan thy hide for nought.

God ha' mercy, good fellow ! said jolly Robin,
Since thou art so kind and free,
And if thou wilt tan my hide for nought,
I'll try as much for thee.

But if thou wilt forsake thy tanner's trade,
To live in the green wood with me,
My name is Robin Hood, I swear by the wood,
To give thee both gold and fee.

If thou be Robin Hood, bold Arthur reply'd,
As I now think well thou art,
Then here's my hand, my name's Arthur-a-Bland,
We two will never part.

But tell me, O tell me, where is Little John?
Of him I fain would hear;
For we are ally'd by the mother's side,
And he is my kinsman dear.

Then Robin Hood blew on his bugle horn,
He blew both loud and shrill;
And quick and anon, he saw Little John,
Come tripping over the hill.

O what is the matter, then said Little John,
Master, I pray you tell?
Why do you stand with your staff in your hand?
I fear all is not well.

O man I do stand, and he makes me to stand,
The tanner who stands by my side;
He's a bonny blade, and master of his trade,
For he hath soundly tanned my hide.

He is to be commended, then said Little John,
If such a feat he can do;
If he be so stout, we will have a bout,
And he shall tan my hide too.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
For as I do understand,
He's a yeoman good, and of thy own blood,
For his name is Arthur-a-Bland.

Then Little John threw his staff away,
As far as he could fling,
And then run out of hand to Arthur-a-Bland,
And about his neck did cling.

With loving respect there was no neglect,
They were neither nice nor coy;
Each other did face with a loving grace,
And both did weep for joy.

Then Robin Hood took them both by the hand,
And danc'd about the oak tree,
For three merry men, and three merry men,
And three merry men we be.

And ever hereafter as long as we live,
We three shall be as one;
The wood it shall ring, and the old wife sing
Of Robin Hood, Arthur, and John.

Robin Hood and the Tinker.

In summer time, when leaves grow green,
And birds do sing on every tree,
Robin Hood went to Nottingham,
As fast as he could dree.

And as he came to Nottingham,
A tinker he did meet,
And seeing him a lusty blade,
He did him kindly greet.

Where dost thou dwell? quoth Robin Hood;
I pray thee now me tell;
Sad news I hear there is abroad,
I fear all is not well.

What is that news? the tinker said,
Tell me without delay;
I am a tinker by my trade,
And do live in Banbury.

As for the news, quoth Robin Hood,
It is but as I hear,
Two tinkers were set in the stocks
For drinking ale and beer.

If that be all, the tinker said,
As I may say to you,
Your news it is not worth a groat,
E'en if it all be true.

For drinking of good ale and beer,
You will not lose your part:
No, by my faith, quoth Robin Hood,
I love it with all my heart.

What news abroad? quoth Robin Hood,
Tell me what thou dost hear;
Seeing thou go'st from town to town,
Some news thou need'st must hear.

All the news I hear, the tinker said,
I hear it is for good,

It is to seek a bold outlaw,
Who they call Robin Hood.

I have a warrant from the king,
To take him where I can ;
If you can tell me where he is,
I will make you a man.

The king will give a hundred pounds,
That he could but him see :
And if we can but now him get,
It will serve both thee and me.

Let's look at the warrant, said Robin Hood
To see if it be right,
And I will do the best I can
To take him this very night.

That I will not, the tinker said,
None with it will I trust ;
And where he is, if you'll not tell,
Take him by chance I must.

But Robin Hood perceiving well,
How then the game would go,
If you will go to Nottingham,
We shall find him there I know.

A crab-tree staff the tinker had,
Which was both good and strong—
Robin he had a good strong blade ;
So they went both along.

And when they came to Nottingham,
There they took up their inn,
And there they call'd for ale and wine,
To drink it was no sin.

But ale and wine they drank so fast,
That the tinker he forgot
What thing he was about to do,
It fell so to his lot ;

That while the tinker fell asleep,
Robin made haste away,
And left the tinker in the lurch,
For the great shot to pay.

But when the tinker did awake,
And saw that he was gone,

He call'd out then unto the host,
And thus he made his moan :

I had a warrant from the king,
Which might have done me good,
It was to seek a bold outlaw,
Some call him Robin Hood.

But now the warrant and money's gone,
Nothing I have left to pay ;
And he who promis'd to be my friend,
Is gone and fled away.

That friend you speak of, said the host,
They call him Robin Hood ;
And when that he first met with you,
He meant you little good.

Had I but known it had been he,
When that I had him here,
The one of us should have tried our might,
Which should have paid full dear.

In the mean time I will away,
No longer here I'll bide,
But I will go and seek him out,
Whatever me betide.

But one thing I would gladly know,
What reckoning is to pay ?
Ten shillings just, then said the host ;
Pay me without delay :

Here take my working tools and bag,
And my good hammer too,
And if I light but on the knave,
I then will soon pay you.

The only way then, said the host,
And not to stand in fear,
Is to seek him among the parks,
Killing of the king's deer.

The tinker then he went with speed,
And made no more delay,
Till he had found bold Robin Hood,
That they might have a fray.

At last he espy'd him in a park,
Hunting then of the deer.

What knave is that, quoth Robin Hood,
That does come me so near?

No knave, no knave, the tinker said,
And that you soon shall know,
Whether of us has done any wrong,
My crab-tree staff shall show.

Then Robin drew his gallant blade,
Made then of trusty steel;
But the tinker he laid on so fast,
That he made Robin reel.

Then Robin's anger did arise,
He fought right manfully,
Until he made the tinker sore,
And almost fit to fly.

Again they laid about again,
And ply'd their weapons fast;
The tinker thrash'd Robin's bones so sore,
He made him yield at last.

A boon, a boon, then Robin cry'd,
If thou wilt grant it me.
Before I do it, the tinker said,
I'll hang thee on this tree.

But as the tinker was looking about,
Robin his horn did blow;
Then came unto him Little John,
And Will Scarlet also.

What is the matter, quoth Little John,
You sit on the highway side?
Here is a tinker, who stands by,
That hath well paid my hide.

What tinker? then, said Little John,
Fain that blade would I see;
And I would try what I could do,
If he'll do as much for me.

But Robin then, he wish'd them both
They would the quarrel cease,
That henceforth we may be as one,
And ever live in peace.

And for the jovial tinker's part,
A hundred pounds I give

In a year, to maintain him on,
As long as he doth live.

In manhood he is a mettled man,
And a mettled man by trade ;
Never thought I that any man
Could have made me so afraid.

And if he will be one of us,
We will all take one fare,
And whatsoever we do get,
He shall have his full share.

So the tinker being quite content
With them to go along,
And with good heart to take a part,
And thus I end my song.



Robin Hood and Allen-a-Dale.

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you who love mirth for to hear,
And I will sing to you of a bold outlaw,
Who lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the green-wood tree,
There he was aware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine could be.

The youngster was clothed in scarlet so red,
In scarlet fine and gay ;

And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chaunted a roundelay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood,
Among the leaves so gay,
There did he spy the same young man
Come drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before,
It was clean cast away ;
And at every step he fetch'd a sigh,
Alack and a well-a-day !

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And Midge the miller's son,
Which made the young man to bend his bow,
When he did see them come.

Stand off, stand off, the young man said,
What is your will with me ?
You must come before our master straight,
Under the green-wood tree.

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin ask'd him courteously,
O hast thou any money to spare,
For my merry men and me ?

I have no money, the young man said,
But five shillings and a ring ;
And that I have kept these seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she from me was ta'en,
And chosen to be an old knight's delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain.

What is thy name ? then said Robin Hood,
Come tell me without fail :
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
My name is Allen-a-Dale.

What wilt thou give me, said Robin Hood,
In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true love again,
And deliver her up to thee ?

I have no money, then quoth the young man,
No ready gold or fee,

But I will swear upon the mass book,
Thy true servant to be.

How many miles is it to thy true love's?
Come tell me without guile,
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
It is but five little mile.

Then Robin he hasten'd him o'er the plain,
He did neither stint nor lint,
Until he came to the porch of the church
Where Allen should keep his wedding.

What dost thou here? the bishop then said
I prithee now tell unto me:
I am a bold harper, quoth Robin Hood,
And the best in the north country.

O welcome! O welcome! the bishop then said,
That music best pleaseth me.

You shall have no music, quoth Robin Hood,
'Till the bride and the bridegroom I see.

With that there came in a wealthy knight,
Who was both grave and old,
And after him a pretty young lass,
She shin'd like the glittering gold.

This is not a fit match, quoth bold Robin Hood,
That you do seem to make here;
For since we are come unto this good church,
The bride shall choose her own dear.

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew out blasts two or three;
Then twenty and four of bowmen bold
Came leaping over the lee.

And when they came into the church-yard,
Marching all on a row,
The first man that enter'd was Allen-a-Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

This is thy true love, Robin said,
Young Allen, as I heard say,
And you shall be married at this same time,
Before we depart away.

That shall not be, the bishop then said
For thy word it shall not stand,

They shall be three times ask'd in the church,
As is the law of our land.

Robin Hood pulled off the bishop's coat,
And put it upon Little John :
By the faith of my body, then Robin he said,
This cloth doth make thee a man.

When Little John went into the choir
The people began to laugh ;
He ask'd them seven times in the church
Lest three times should not be enough.

Who gives this maid ? said Little John,
Quoth Robin Hood, that do I,
And he who takes her from Allen-a-Dale,
Full dearly shall her buy.

And thus having ended this merry wedding,
The bride she look'd like a queen ;
And so they returned to the merry green wood,
Amongst the leaves so green.

Robin Hood and the Shepherd.

All gentlemen and yeomen good,
I wish you to draw near,
For a story of bold Robin Hood
Unto you I will declare.

As Robin Hood walk'd the forest along,
Some pastime for to spy,
There did he find a jolly shepherd,
Who on the ground did lie.

Arise, arise, said jolly Robin,
And now come let me see
What's in thy bag and thy bottle, I say
Come tell it unto me.

What's that to thee, thou proud fellow ?
Tell me as I do stand,
What hast thou to do with my bottle and bag ?
Let me see thy command.

My sword that hangeth by my side,
Is at my command I know :
Come, let me taste of thy bottle,
Or it may breed thee woe.

The devil a drop, thou proud fellow,
Of my bottle shalt thou see,
Until thy valour here is try'd,
Whether thou wilt fight or flee.

What shall we fight for? said Robin Hood,
Come tell it unto me;
Here's twenty pounds of good bright gold,
Win it, and take it thee.

The shepherd stood all in amaze,
And knew not what to say;
I have no money, thou proud fellow,
But bag and bottle I'll lay.

I am content, thou shepherd swain,
Fling them down on the ground;
But it will breed thee mickle pain,
To win my twenty pound.

Come draw thy sword, thou proud fellow,
Who standeth too long to prate,
This hook of mine shall let thee know,
A coward I do hate.

So they fell to it hard and sore,
It was on a summer's day,
From ten to four in the afternoon
The shepherd held him in play.

Robin's buckler prov'd his chief defence,
And sav'd him many a bang,
For every blow the shepherd struck
Made Robin Hood's sword cry twang.

Many sturdy blows the shepherd gave,
And that bold Robin found,
'Till blood ran trickling down his head,
Then he fell to the ground.

Arise, arise, thou proud fellow,
And thou shalt have fair play,
Or wilt thou yield before I go,
That I have won the day.

A boon, a boon, cry'd bold Robin,
If that a man thou be,
Then let me have my bugle horn,
And blow out blasts but three.

Then said the shepherd to bold Robin,
To that I will agree ;
For if thou shouldst blow till morrow's morn,
I scorn one foot to flee.

Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,
And blew with might and main,
Until he spied Little John
Come tripping o'er the plain.

Who is that bowman, thou proud fellow,
That comes down yonder hill ?
That bowman is John, bold Robin Hood's man,
Shall fight with thee thy fill.

What is the matter ? then said Little John
Master, come tell unto me :
My case is bad, said Robin Hood,
For the shepherd hath conquer'd me.

I am glad of that, cries Little John,
Shepherd turn thou to me ;
For a bout with thee I mean to have,
Either come fight or flee.

With all my heart, thou proud fellow,
For it shall ne'er be said,
That a shepherd's hook, at thy sturdy look,
Will one jot be dismay'd.

So they fell to it, hard and sore,
Striving for victory.
I will know, says John, ere we give o'er,
Whether thou wilt fight or flee.

The shepherd gave John a sturdy blow,
With the hook under his chin ;
Beshrew thy heart, said Little John,
Thou basely dost begin.

Nay, that is nothing, said the shepherd,
Either yield to me the day,
Or I will bang thy back and sides,
Before thou goest thy way.

What dost thou think, thou proud fellow,
That thou canst conquer me ?
Nay, thou shalt know before I go,
I'll fight before I'll flee.

Again the shepherd he laid on him,
The shepherd he had begun ;
Hold thy hand, cry'd jolly Robin,
I will yield the wager won.

With all my heart, said Little John,
To that I will agree,
For he is the flower of shepherd swains,
The like I ne'er did see.

Thus have you heard of Robin Hood,
Also of Little John,
How a shepherd swain did conquer them,
The like was never known.

Robin Hood and the Curtal Friar.

In summer time when leaves grow green,
And flowers are fresh and gay,
Robin Hood and his merry men
Were all dispos'd to play.

Then some would leap, and some would run,
And some use artillery ;
But which of you can draw a good bow,
A good archer for to be ?

Which of you can kill a buck,
Or who can kill a doe ?
Or who can kill a hart of Greece,
Five hundred foot him fro'.

Will Scarlet he did kill a buck,
And Midge did kill a doe ;
And Little John killed a hart of Greece,
Five hundred foot him fro'.

God bless the heart, said bold Robin Hood,
That shot such a shot for me ;
I would ride my horse a hundred miles ;
To find one that could match thee.

That caus'd Will Scarlet for to laugh,
He laugh'd full heartily :
There lives a friar in Fountain Abbey
Will beat both him and thee.

The curtal friar in Fountain Abbey
Well can a strong bow draw ;

He will beat you and your yeomanry,
Set them all in a row.

Robin Hood took a solemn oath,
It was by Mary free,
That he would neither eat nor drink,
'Till he the friar did see.

Robin Hood put on his harness good,
And on his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him well.

He took his bow into his hand,
It was of a trusty tree,
With a sheaf of arrows by his side,
And to Fountain Dale went he.

And coming to fair Fountain Dale,
No farther would he ride,
There he was aware of the curtal friar
Walking by the water side.

The friar had on a harness good,
And on his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him well.

Robin Hood alighted from off his horse,
And tied him to a thorn,
Take me over the water thou curtal friar,
Or else thy life's forlorn.

The friar took Robin Hood on his back,
Deep water they did bestride,
And neither spake word good nor bad,
'Till he came on the other side.

Lightly stept Robin off the friar's back ;
The friar said to him again,
Take me over the water, thou fine fellow,
Or it will breed thee pain.

Robin Hood took the friar on his back,
Deep water he did bestride,
And spake neither word good nor bad
'Till he came on the other side.

Lightly leap'd the friar off Robin's back,
Bold Robin said to him again,

Take me over the water, thou curtal friar,
Or it shall breed thee pain.

The friar took Robin on his back again,
And into the water went he,
And till he came to the middle stream
Neither bad nor good spake he.

And coming to the middle stream,
There he threw Robin in ;
And choose thee, choose thee, fine fellow,
Whether thou wilt sink or swim.

Robin swam to a bush of broom,
The friar to the willow wand ;
Bold Robin Hood went to the shore,
And took his bow in his hand,

One of the best arrows under his belt
To the friar he let fly :

The curtal friar with his steel buckler
Did put his arrow by.

Shoot on, shoot on, thou fine fellow,
Shoot as thou hast begun,
If thou shoot here a summer's day,
Thy mark I will not shun.

Robin shot on so passing well,
'Till his arrows all were gone,
They took their swords and steel bucklers
And fought with might and main,

From ten o'clock that very day,
'Till four in the afternoon ;
Then Robin Hood came on his knee
Of the friar to beg a boon.

A boon, a boon, thou curtal friar,
I beg it on my knee :
Give me leave to set my horn to my mouth,
And to blow blasts just three.

That I will do, says the curtal friar,
Of thy blasts I have no doubt ;
I hope thou wilt blow so passing well,
'Till both thy eyes drop out.

Robin Hood set his horn to his mouth,
And blew out blasts full three ;

Half a hundred yeomen, with their bows bent,
Came ranging over the lee.

Whose men are these, said the friar,
That come so hastily?

Those are mine, said bold Robin Hood,
Friar, what is that to thee?

A boon, a boon, said the curtal friar,
The like I gave to thee;
Give me leave to set my fist to my mouth,
And then to whoot whoots three.

That I will do, said Robin Hood,
Or else I were to blame;
Three whoots in a friar's fist
Would make him glad I fain.

The friar set his fist to his mouth,
And whooted him whoots three;
Half a hundred good bay dogs
Came running over the lee.

Here is for every man a dog,
And I myself for thee;
Nay, by my faith, said Robin Hood,
Friar, that may not be.

Two dogs at once to Robin did go,
One behind, the other before,
Robin Hood's mantle of Lincoln green
From off his back they tore.

And whether his men shot east or west,
Or they shot north or south,
The curtal dogs, so taught were they,
They caught the arrows in their mouth.

Take up thy dogs, said Little John,
Friar, at my bidding thee.
Whose man art thou, said the curtal friar,
Come here to prate to me?

I am Little John, Robin Hood's man,
Friar, I will not lie;
If thou take not up thy dogs anon,
I'll take them up and thee.

Little John had a bow in his hand,
He shot with might and main,

Soon half a score of the friar's dogs
Laid dead upon the plain.
Hold hands ! hold hands ! said the curtal friar
Thy master and I will agree,
And we will have new orders taken
With all the haste that may be.
If thou wilt forsake fair Fountain Dale,
And Fountain Abbey free,
Every Sunday throughout the year
Chang'd shall thy garment be :
Every Sunday throughout the year
A noble shall be thy fee,
If thou wilt go to fair Nottingham,
And there remain with me.
The curtal friar had kept Fountain Dale
Seven long years and more ;
There was never knight, lord, nor earl,
Could make him yield before.

Robin Hood and Will Scarlet.

Come listen awhile, you gentlemen all,
That are this bower within,
For a story of gallant Robin Hood,
I purpose now to begin.
What time of day ? quoth Robin Hood :
Quoth Little John, 'Tis in the prime ;
Why then we will to the green-wood gang,
For we have no victuals to dine.
As Robin Hood rode the forest along,
It was in the midst of the day,
There he was aware of a deft young man,
As ever walk'd on the way.
His doublet was of silk so good,
His stockings like scarlet shone,
And bravely he walk'd along the way,
To Robin Hood then unknown.
A herd of deer was in the bend,
All feeding before his face ;
Now the best of you I'll have to my dinner,
And that in a little space.

Now the stranger made no mickle ado,
But bent a right good bow,
And the best of all the herd he slew,
Full forty yards him fro'.

Well shot, well shot, said Robin Hood then,
That shot it was in time,
And if thou wilt accept of the place,
Thou shalt be a bold yeoman of mine.

Go play the chivan, the stranger then said,
Make haste and quickly go,
Or with my fist, be sure of this,
I'll give thee buffets eno'.

Thou had best not buffet me, Robin replied,
For altho' I seem forlorn,
I have plenty of those to take my part,
If I do but blow my horn.

Blow not thy horn, the stranger then said,
Be'st thou never in so much haste,
For I can draw a good broad sword,
And quickly cut the blast.

Then Robin Hood bent a very good bow,
To shoot, and that he would fain ;
The stranger also bent a good bow,
To shoot at bold Robin again.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, quoth Robin Hood,
To shoot it would be in vain ;
For if we shoot the one at the other,
The one of us must be slain.

Then Robin lent the stranger a blow,
Most scar'd him out of his wits :
Thou'lt feel a blow, the stranger he said
That shall be better quits.

The stranger then, with a good broad sword,
Hit Robin upon the crown,
That from every hair of bold Robin's head
The blood it ran trickling down.

God 'ha mercy, good fellow, quoth Robin Hood then ;
And for this that thou hast done,
Tell me, good fellow, who thou art ?
Tell me where thou dost won ?

The stranger then answer'd bold Robin Hood,
I'll tell thee where I do dwell ;
In Maxwell town I was born and bred,
My name is young Gamwell.

For killing of my father's steward,
Am forc'd to the English wood,
There for to seek an uncle of mine,
Some call him Robin Hood.

But art thou a cousin of Robin Hood then,
The sooner we shall have done ?
As I hope to be sav'd, young Gamwell then said,
I am his own sister's son.

But, lord ! what greeting and friendship were there
When these two cousins did meet !
They went all about that long summer's day,
And Little John did not meet.

But when they did meet with Little John,
He then unto him did say,
O master, dear master ! where have you been,
You have tarry'd so long away ?

I met with a stranger, quoth bold Robin Hood,
Full sore he hath beaten me :
Then I'll have a bout with him, said Little John,
And try if he can beat me.

O no, O no, quoth Robin Hood then,
Little John, it must not be so ;
For he is my own dear sister's son,
And cousins I have no mo'.

But he shall be a bold yeoman of mine,
My chief man next to thee ;
And I Robin Hood, and thou Little John,
And Will Scarlet he shall be.

And we will be three of the boldest outlaws
That live in the north country.
If thou wilt hear more of bold Robin Hood,
In the sequel of this it will be.

Then bold Robin Hood to the north he went,
With valour and mickle might,
With sword by his side, which oft had been try'd,
To recover the king his right.

The first that he met was a bonny bold Scot,
 His servant he said he would be ;
 No, quoth Robin Hood, it cannot be good,
 For thou wilt prove false unto me.

Thou hast not been true to king or cuz :
 Nay, marry, the Scot he said,
 As true as your heart, I'll never part,
 Good master, be not afraid.

Then Robin turned his face to the east,
 Fight on my merry men stout,
 Our cause is good, quoth Robin Hood,
 And we shall not be beaten out.

The battle grew hot on every side,
 The Scotchman made great moan :
 Quoth Jockey, geud faith, they kill on each side,
 Would I were with my wife Joan.

The enemy compass'd brave Robin about,
 'Tis long ere the battle ends ;
 There's neither will yield, nor give up the field,
 For both are supplied with friends.

This song it was made in Robin Hood's days ;
 Let's pray unto Jove above,
 To give us true peace, that mischief may cease,
 And war may give place unto love.

Renowned Robin Hood.

Gold taken from the king's harbingers,
 As seldom hath been seen,
 And carried by bold Robin Hood,
 For a present to the queen.

If that I live one year to an end,
 Thus did Queen Catherine say,
 Bold Robin Hood, I'll be thy friend,
 And all thy yeomen gay.

The queen is to her chamber gone,
 As fast as she could wen ;
 She calls to her her lovely page,
 Nam'd Richard Partington.

Come hither to me, thou lovely page,
 Come thou hither unto me,

For thou must post to Nottingham,
As fast as thou canst flee.

And as thou go'st to Nottingham,
Search every English wood,
Inquire of one good yeoman or other,
To tell thee of Robin Hood.

Sometimes he walk'd, sometimes he ran,
As fast as he could wen,
And when he came to Nottingham,
There he took up his inn.

He calls for a bottle of Rhenish wine,
And drinks a health to the queen,
Wishing he might now speedily
Find out jolly Robin.

There sat a yeoman by his side,
Who said, Sweet page, tell me,
What is thy business, and thy cause,
So far in the north country?

This is my business, and my cause,
Sir, I'll tell it you for good,
To inquire of one good yeoman or other,
To tell me of Robin Hood.

I'll get my horse betimes in the morn,
Be it by the break of day,
And I will show thee bold Robin Hood,
And all his yeomen gay.

When that he came to Robin Hood's place,
He fell down on his knee:
Queen Catherine she doth greet you well,
She greets you well by me.

She bids you post to fair London court,
Not fearing any thing,
For there shall be a little sport,
And she hath sent you a ring.

Robin Hood took his mantle from his back,
It was of Lincoln green,
And sent it by the lovely page,
For a present to the queen.

In summer time, when leaves grow green,
'Twas a comely sight to see

How Robin Hood had drest himself,
And all his yeomen free.

He clothed his men in Lincoln green,
And himself in scarlet red ;
Black hats, white feathers, all alike,
Now bold Robin Hood is rid.

And when he came to London court,
He fell down on his knee :
Thou art welcome, Locksley, said the queen,
And all thy yeomanry.

Come hither, Tepus, said the king,
Bow bearer after me ;
Come measure me out with a line
How long our mark must be.

What is this wager ? said the queen,
For that I must know here :
Three hundred tuns of Rhenish wine,
Three hundred tuns of beer ;

Three hundred of the fattest harts
That run on Dallen Lee.
That's a princely wager, said the queen,
That I must needs tell thee.

With that bespoke one Clifton then,
Full quickly and full soon,
Measure no mark for us, my liege,
We will shoot at sun and moon.

Full fifteen score your mark shall be,
Full fifteen score shall stand :
I'll lay my bow, said Clifton then,
I'll cleave the willow wand.

With that the king's archers led about
'Till it was three to one ;
With that the ladies began to shout,
Madam, your game is gone.

A boon, a boon, Queen Catherine cries,
I crave it on my knee ;
Is there never a knight of your privy council,
On Queen Catherine's side will be ?

Come hither to me, Sir Robert Lee,
Thou art a knight full good,

For I do know thy pedigree,
Thou sprang'st from Gower's blood.
Come hither to me, thou Hereford bishop,
For a noble priest art thee :
By my silver mitre, said the bishop then,
I'll not bet one penny—
The king has archers of his own,
Full ready and full right ;
And these be strangers every one,
No man knows what they height.
What wilt thou bet ? said Robin Hood,
Thou seest our game's the worse.
By my silver mitre, then said the bishop,
All the money in my purse.
What is in thy purse ? said Robin Hood,
Now throw it on the ground.
Ninety-nine angels, said the bishop,
'Tis near to fifty pound.
Robin Hood took his bag from his side,
And threw it on the green ;
Will Scarlet then went smiling away,
I know who this money must win.
With that the king's archers led about,
Until it was three to three ;
With that the ladies gave a shout,
Woodcock, beware thy knee.
It is three to three, now said the king,
The next three pays for all ;
Robin Hood went and whisper'd the queen,
The king's part is but small.
Then blithe Robin Hood did leap about,
He shot it under hand ;
And Clifton, with a bearing arrow,
Did cleave the willow wand ;
And little Midge, the miller's son,
He shot not much the worse ;
He shot within a stroke of the mark ;
Now, bishop, beware thy purse.
A boon, a boon, Queen Catherine cries,
I crave it on my bare knee,

That you will angry be with none
That are of my party.

They shall have forty days to come,
And forty days to go,
And three times forty to sport and play,
Then welcome friend or foe.

Thou art welcome, Robin Hood, said the queen,
And so is Little John,
And so is Midge, the miller's son—
Thrice welcome every one.

Is this Robin Hood? the king then said,
For it was told to me,
That he was slain at the palace gate,
I' the wars in the north country.

Is this Robin Hood? quoth the bishop then,
As it seems well to be:
Had I known it had been that bold outlaw,
I would not have bet one penny.

He took me late one Sunday night,
And bound me fast to a tree,
And made me sing mass, God wot,
To him and his yeomanry.

What, an I did, says Robin Hood,
Of that mass I was full fain,
For recompence of that, he says,
Here's half thy gold again.

Now nay, now nay, says Little John,
Master, that may not be,
We must not give gifts to the king's officers,
That gold will serve thee and me.

Robin Hood's Chase.

Come gallants all, to you I call,
That are now in this place,
For a song I'll sing of Henry our king,
How he did bold Robin chase.

Queen Catherine she a match did make,
As plainly doth appear,
For three hundred tuns of wine,
And three hundred tuns of beer.

But she had her archers for to seek,
 With their bows and arrows good ;
 But her mind was bent, with a full intent,
 To send for bold Robin Hood.

But when bold Robin Hood he came there,
 Queen Catherine she did say,
 Thou art welcome, Locksley, unto me,
 And thou on my part must play.

If I miss the mark, be it light or dark,
 And all my yeomen gay,
 For the match of shooting you have made,
 Then hanged I will be.

But when the game began to be play'd,
 Bold Robin won it with grace ;
 But after the king was angry with him,
 And vow'd he would him chase.

What ! though his pardon granted was,
 While he did with him stay ;
 But yet the king was vex'd at him,
 When he was gone away.

Soon after the king from court did hie,
 In a furious angry mood,
 And often inquired, both far and near,
 After bold Robin Hood.

But when the king to Nottingham came,
 Bold Robin was in the wood,
 O come, says he, and let me see,
 Who can find bold Robin Hood.

But when bold Robin he did hear,
 The king had him in chase,
 Then said Little John, 'tis time to be gone,
 And that to another place.

And away they went from merry Sherwood,
 And into Yorkshire did hie ;
 And the king did follow, with a hoop and halloo,
 But could not him come nigh.

Yet jolly Robin he passed along,
 And went straight to Newcastle town,
 And there they staid hours two or three,
 From thence to Berwick he's gone.

When the king did see how Robin did flee,
He was vexed wondrous sore ;
With a hoop and halloo, he vow'd to follow,
And take him, or ne'er give o'er.
Come now let's away, says Little John,
Let any follow who dare ;
To Carlisle we'll hie, with our company,
And so then to Lancaster.
From Lancaster then to Chester he went,
And so did good king Henry ;
But Robin went away, for he durst not stay,
For fear of some treachery.
Says Robin, Come let us for London go,
To see our royal queen's face ;
It may be she wants our company,
Which makes the king us chase.
When Robin he came queen Catherine before,
He fell upon his knee ;
If it please your grace, I am come to this place,
To speak with king Henry.
Queen Catherine answer'd bold Robin again,
He is gone to merry Sherwood,
And when he went away to me he did say,
He would go and seek Robin Hood.
Then fare you well, my gracious queen,
For to Sherwood I'll hie apace,
For fain would I see what he'd have with me,
If I could but meet with his grace.
But when king Henry he came home,
Full weary and vex'd in mind,
And he did hear Robin Hood had been there,
He blam'd Dame Fortune unkind.
You're welcome home, queen Catherine cry'd,
Henry, my sovereign liege ;
Bold Robin Hood, that archer good,
Your person hath been to seek.
A boon, a boon, queen Catherine cry'd,
I beg it here of your grace,
To pardon his life ; and seek not strife ;
And so ends Robin Hood's chace.

*Robin Hood's Golden Prize.*

I have heard talk of Robin Hood,
And of brave Little John,
Of Friar Tuck, and Will Scarlet,
Locksley, and maid Marian.

But such a tale as this before
I think was never known,
For Robin Hood disguis'd himself,
And from the wood is gone.

Like to a friar bold Robin Hood
Was accountred in his array;
With hood, gown, beads, and crucifix,
He passed upon the way.

He had not gone past miles two or three,
Ere 'twas his chance to espy,
Two lusty priests clad all in black,
Come riding gallantly.

Benedicite, then said Robin Hood,
Some pity on me take,
Cross my hand with a single groat,
For our dear lady's sake;

For I have been wand'ring all this day,
And nothing could I get;
Not so much as one poor cup of drink,
Nor bit of bread to eat.

By our holy dame, the priests reply'd,
We never a penny have,
For we this morning have been robbed,
And could no money save.

I am much afraid, said bold Robin Hood,
That you both tell a lie,
And now before you do go from hence,
I am resolv'd to try.

When as the priests heard him say so,
Then away they rode amain,
But Robin Hood betook to his speed,
And soon o'ertook them again.

Then Robin Hood laid hold of them both,
And pull'd them from their horse.
O spare us, friar, the priests cry'd out,
On us have some remorse.

No money you have, quoth bold Robin Hood,
Therefore, without delay,
We three will fall down on our knees,
And for money we will pray.

The priests they could not him gainsay,
But down they kneel with speed ;
Send us, O send us, then, quoth they,
Some money to serve our need !

The priests did pray with mournful cheer,
Sometimes their hands did wring,
Sometimes they wept and tore their hair,
Whilst Robin did merrily sing.

When they had been praying for one hour's space,
The priests did still lament ;
Then, quoth Robin, now let us see
What money heaven hath sent.

We will be sharers all alike
Of money that we have,
And there is never a one of us
That his fellow shall deceive.

The priests their hands in their pockets put,
But money could find none,
We will search ourselves, said Robin Hood,
Each other, one by one.

Then Robin Hood he search'd them both,
And found good store of gold ;
Five hundred pieces presently
Upon the grass he told.

Here is a brave show, said Robin Hood,
Such store of gold to see,
And you each one shall have a part,
Because you pray'd heartily.

He gave them fifty pounds a-piece,
And the rest himself did keep :
The priests they durst not speak one word,
But sighed wondrous deep.

With that the priests rose from the ground,
Thinking to have parted so ;
Nay, nay, said Robin, there's something more
I've to say before you go :

You shall be sworn, says bold Robin Hood,
Upon this holy grass,
That you will never tell lies again,
Which way soever you pass.

The second oath that you here must make,
That all the days of your lives,
You never shall tempt maids unto sin
Nor lay with other men's wives.

The last oath you shall take is this,
Be charitable to the poor ;
And say you met with a holy friar,
Then I desire no more.

He set them on their horses again,
And away then they did ride.
And he return'd to the merry green wood,
With great joy, mirth, and pride.

Robin Hood rescuing Will Stutely.

When Robin Hood in the green wood stood,
Under the green-wood tree,
Tidings there came to him with speed,
Tidings for certainty,

That Will Stutely surprised was,
And eke in prison lay ;

(Three varlets that the king had hir'd,
Did basely him betray.)

Aye, and to-morrow hang'd must be,
To-morrow as soon as 'tis day.
Yet before they could the victory get,
Stutely did two of them slay.

When Robin Hood did hear this news,
Lord! it did grieve him sore,
And to his merry men he did say,
Who altogether swore,

That Will Stutely he should rescu'd be,
And safe brought back again,
Or else should many a gallant wight
For his sake there be slain.

He clothed himself in scarlet then,
His men were all in green;
A finer show throughout the world
In no place could be seen.

Good Lord! it was a gallant sight,
To see them all in a row,
With every man a good broad sword,
And eke a good yew bow.

Forth through the green wood they are gone,
Yea, all courageously,
Resolving to bring Will Stutely home,
Or every man to die.

And when they came the castle near,
Wherein Will Stutely lay,
I hold it good, said Robin Hood,
We here in ambush stay,

And send one forth some news to hear,
To yonder Palmer fair,
That stands under the castle wall,
Some news he may declare.

With that steps forth a brave young man,
Who was of courage bold,
And thus did he to the Palmer say:
I pray thee, Palmer old,

Tell me, if thou rightly ken,
When must Will Stutely die,

Who is one of bold Robin Hood's men,
And here doth prisoner lie?

Alas! alas! the Palmer said,
And for ever woe is me!

Will Stutely hang'd will be this day,
On yonder gallows tree. 3888W

O! had his noble master known,
He soon would send him aid;
A few of his bold yeomanry
Would make them all afraid.

Aye, that is true, the young man said,
Aye, that is true, said he;
Or if they were near to this place,
They soon would set him free.

But fare thee will, thou good old man,
Farewell, and thanks to thee;
If Stutely hanged is this day,
Reveng'd his death will be.

No sooner was he from the Palmer gone,
But the gates were open'd wide,
And out of the castle Will Stutely came,
Guarded on every side.

When he was forth of the castle come,
And saw no help was nigh,
Thus he did say to the sheriff,
Thus he said gallantly:

Now seeing that I needs must die,
Grant me one boon, said he,
For my noble master ne'er had a man
That yet was hang'd on a tree.

Give me a sword all in my hand,
And let me be unbound,
And with thee and thy men I'll fight
'Till I lay dead on the ground.

But this desire he would not grant,
His wishes were in vain,
For the sheriff swore he hang'd should be,
And not by the sword be slain.

Do but unbind my hands, he said,
I will no weapon crave;

And if I hanged be this day,
Salvation let me have.

O no, no, no, the sheriff said,
Thou shalt on the gallows die ;
Aye, and so shall thy master too,
If ever in me it lie.

O dastard coward ! Will Stutely cries,
Faint-hearted peasant slave !
If ever my master doth thee meet
Thou shalt thy payment have.

My noble master doth thee scorn
And all thy cowardly crew ;
Such silly imps unable are,
Bold Robin to subdue.

But when he was to the gallows gone,
And ready to bid adieu,
Out of a bush steps Little John,
And comes Will Stutely to.

I pray thee, Will, before thou die,
Of thy dear friends take leave :
I needs must borrow him awhile,
How say you, Master Sherive ?

Now, as I live, the sheriff said,
That varlet well I know ;
Some sturdy rebel is that same,
Therefore let him not go.

Then Little John most hastily
Away cut Stutely's bands,
And from one of the sheriff's men,
A sword twitch'd from his hands.

Here, Will, take thou this sword,
Thou canst it better sway,
And here defend thyself awhile,
For aid will come straightway.

And there they turn'd them back to back,
And kept the guard at bay,
'Till Robin Hood approached near,
With many an archer gay.

With that an arrow from them flew,
I wist from Robin Hood ;

Make haste, make haste, the sheriff said,
Make haste, for 'tis not good.

The sheriff then, and his doughty men,
Thought it no boot to stay,
But, as their master had them taught,
They ran full fast away.

O stay ! O stay ! Will Stutely said,
Take leave ere you depart,
You ne'er will catch bold Robin Hood,
Unless you dare him meet.

O ! ill betide you, said Robin Hood,
That you so soon are gone ;
My sword may in the scabbard rest,
For here our work is done.

I little thought, Will Stutely said,
When I came to this place,
For to have met with Little John,
Or seen my master's face.

Then Stutely was at liberty set,
And safe brought from his foe :
O thanks ! O thanks ! to my master,
And his merry men also.

And once again, my fellows all,
We shall in the green wood meet,
Where we'll make our bow-strings twang
Music for us most sweet.

Robin Hood and the Fisherman.

Bold Robin Hood being weary of the wood,
And chasing the king's deer,
Said, Fishermen brave more money have
Than tradesmen here or there :

So I will to Scarborough go,
That a fisherman I may be :
Robin then left his merry men all
Under the green-wood tree.

He hir'd himself in a fishing bark,
With fishermen for to go,
Who pluck'd up anchor and away did sail,
And sometime they did row.

They had not sailed very far,
Nor of fish had caught great store,
Ere Robin espied a French ship of war,
Which down upon them bore.

O woe is me, said the master then,
The day that e'er I was born,
For all the fish that we have got,
To us is lost and forlorn !

For these French robbers on the seas,
They will not spare us long,
But carry us to the coast of France,
And lay us in prison strong.

Bold Robin said, Do not them fear,
Neither, master, take you care,
Give me a bent bow in my hand,
And not one of them will I spare.

Hold thy peace, thou land-lubber,
For thou art but brass and boast,
If I should cast you overboard,
There's but a lubber lost.

Robin grew angry at these words,
And so angry then was he,
That he took his bent bow in his hand,
And to the ship's hatch went he,
Saying, Master, tie me to the mast,
That at my mark I may stand fair ;
Then give me my bent bow in my hand,
And not a Frenchman will I spare.

He drew his arrow to the head,
And drew it with such might and main,
That straight in the twinkling of an eye,
The French captain he was slain.

The Frenchman fell down on the ship's hatch,
And under the hatches below ;
Another Frenchman that him espied,
His corpse in the sea did throw.

Then straight they boarded the French ship,
They laying dead, all in their sight ;
They found within the ship of war,
Twelve thousand pounds in money bright.

The one half of the ship, said Robin then,
I'll give the poor widows, and children small,
The other half of the ship I'll give
To you that are my fellows all.

The master then replied again,
Bold Robin that must not be,
The ship you have won with your own hands,
And owner of it you shall be.

It shall be just as I have said,
Bold Robin replied, and for the opprest,
An habitation will I build,
Where they shall live in peace and rest.

Robin Hood's Delight.

There's some will talk of lords and knights,
And some of yeomen good,
But I will tell you of Will Scarlet,
Little John, and Robin Hood.

They were outlaws, as 'tis well known,
And men of noble blood,
And many a time their valour shown
In the forest of merry Sherwood.

Upon a time it chanced so,
As Robin Hood would have it be,
They all three would a walking go,
The pastime for to see.

And as they walked the forest along,
Upon a midsummer day,
There was he aware of three foresters,
All clad in green array.

With brave long falchions by their sides,
And forest bills in their hands,
They called aloud to those outlaws,
And charged them to stand.

Why, who are you, cry'd bold Robin,
That walk so boldly here?
We three belong to king Henry,
Being keepers of his deer.

The devil you are, said Robin Hood,
I am sure it is not so;

We be the keepers of this forest,
And that you soon shall know.

Your coats of green lay on the ground,
And so we will all three,
And take your swords and bucklers round,
And try the victory.

We be content, the keepers said,
We be three, and no less,
Then why should we of you be afraid
As we never did transgress?

Why if you be the keepers of this forest,
We be three rangers good,
And let you know, before you do go,
You met with bold Robin Hood.

We be content, thou bold outlaw,
Our courage here to try,
And will make you know, before you do go,
We will fight before we will fly.

Then draw your swords, you bold outlaws,
No longer stand to prate,
But let us try it straight with blows,
For cowards we do hate.

Here is one for thee, Will Scarlet,
And another for Little John,
And I myself for Robin Hood,
Because he is stout and strong.

So they fell to it hard and sore,
It was on a Midsummer day;
From eight of the clock, 'till two and past,
They all show'd gallant play.

There Robin, Will, and Little John,
They fought most manfully,
'Till all their wind was spent and gone,
Then Robin loud did cry,

O hold! O hold! cries bold Robin,
I see you be stout men,
Let me blow one blast on my bugle horn,
Then I'll fight with you again.

That bargain's to make, bold Robin Hood,
Therefore we it deny;

Thy blast upon thy bugle horn,
Cannot make us fight or fly.
Therefore fall on, or else begone,
And yield to us the day.
It ne'er shall be said, that we are afraid
Of thee, or thy yeomen gay.
If that be so, cries Robin Hood,
Let me but know your names,
And in the forest of merry Sherwood,
I shall extol your fames.
And with our names, one of them said,
What hast thou here to do?
Except that thou wilt fight it out,
Our names thou shalt not know.
We'll fight no more, said bold Robin Hood,
You be men of valour stout,
Come go with me to Nottingham,
And there we will drink it out.
With a butt of sack we will hang it about,
To see who wins the day;
And for the cost make you no doubt,
I have gold enough to pay.
And ever hereafter, as long as we live,
We all will brethren be;
For I love those men with heart and hand,
That will fight and never flee.
So away they went to Nottingham,
With sack to make amends:
For three whole days they the wine did chase,
And drank themselves good friends.

Robin Hood and the Beggar.

Come listen awhile, you gentlemen all,
That mirth do love for to hear,
And a story true I'll tell unto you,
If that you will draw near.
In elder times, when merriments were,
And archery holden good,
There was an outlaw, as many do know,
Which men called Robin Hood.

On a Michaelmas day, it chanced so
Bold Robin was merry dispos'd,
His time to spend he did intend,
Either with friend or foe.

Then he got indeed, a gallant steed,
The which was worth angels ten,
With a mantle of green, most brave to be seen,
He left all his merry men.

And riding towards Nottingham,
Some pastime for to spy,
There did he meet with a jolly beggar,
As e'er he beheld with his eye.

An old patch'd coat the beggar had on,
Which daily he used to wear;
And many a bag about him did wag,
Which made Robin to him repair.

God speed, God speed, said Robin Hood then,
What countryman, tell unto me?
I am Yorkshire, Sir, but ere you go far,
Some charity give unto me.

I have no money, said Robin Hood then,
But a rover within the wood.
I am an outlaw, as many do know,
My name it is Robin Hood.

But yet I must tell thee, bonny beggar
That a bout with thee I must try:
Thy coat of grey lay down, I say,
And my mantle of green shall lay by.

Content, content, the beggar cry'd,
Thy part it will be the worse,
For I hope this bout to give thee the rout,
And then have at thy purse.

The beggar he had a mickle long staff,
And Robin had a nut-brown sword.
The beggar drew nigh, and at Robin let fly,
But gave him never a word.

Fight on, fight on, said Robin then,
This game well pleaseth me,
But for every blow that Robin gave,
The beggar gave buffets three.

And fighting there full hardy and sore
Not far from Nottingham town,
They never fled, 'till from Robin Hood's head
The blood it ran trickling down.

O hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
And thou and I will agree :
If that be true, the beggar he said,
Thy mantle come give unto me.

Now a change, a change, said Robin Hood
Thy bags and coat give me ;
And this mantle of mine I'll to thee resign,
My horse and my bravery.

When Robin Hood got the beggar's cloths,
He looked round about ;
Methinks, said he, I seem to be,
A beggar brave and stout :

For now I have a bag for my bread
And another for my corn,
I have one for salt, and another for malt,
And one for my little horn.

And now I will a begging go,
Some charity for to find ;
And if any more of Robin you'll know,
In the sequel you will it find.

Now Robin he is to Nottingham bound,
With his bag hanging down to his knee,
His staff and his coat scarce worth a groat,
Yet merrily on passed he.

As Robin he passed the streets along,
He heard a pitiful cry ;
Three brethren dear, as he did hear,
Condemned were to die.

Then Robin hied to the sheriff's house,
Some relief there for to seek :
He skipp'd, he leap'd, and caper'd full high
As he went along the street.

But when to the sheriff's house he came,
There a gentleman fine and brave,
Thou beggar, said he, come tell unto me,
What is it thou would'st have ?

No meat nor drink, said Robin Hood then,
That I come here to crave;
But to get the lives of yeomen three,
And that I fain would have.

That cannot be, thou bold beggar,
The fact it is so clear;
I tell to thee, they hang'd must be,
For stealing our king's deer.

But when to the gallows they did come,
There were many a weeping eye;
O hold your peace, said Robin Hood then,
For certain they shall not die.

Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,
And he blew out blasts just three,
When a hundred bold archers brave,
Came kneeling down to his knee.

What is your will, master? then said they,
We are at thy command.
Shoot east, shoot west, said Robin then,
And see you spare no man.

Then they shot east, and they shot west,
Their arrows were so keen;
The sheriff he, and his company,
No longer could be seen.

Then he stept to those brethren three,
And away he had them ta'en;
The sheriff was crost, and many men lost,
That lay dead upon the plain.

And away they went to the merry green wood,
And sung with a merry glee,
And Robin Hood took these three brethren good,
To be of his yeomanry.

Robin Hood and the Giants.

Robin Hood, Will Scarlet, and Little John,
Were walking over the plain,
With a good fat buck, which Will Scarlet
With his strong yew bow had slain.

To yonder lodge let us take our way,
I think it wond'rous good,

Where I have a nephew, and his good lady,
 Will welcome us to the green wood.
 With that he took the bugle horn,
 Full well he could it blow ;
 Straight from the woods came marching down
 One hundred tall fellows and mo'.
 Stand, stand to your arms, says Will Scarlet,
 Lo ! the enemies are within ken ;
 With that bold Robin he laughed aloud,
 Crying, They are my own yeomen.
 Who when they arriv'd, and bold Robin espy'd,
 Cry'd, Master, what is your will ?
 We thought you had in great danger been,
 Your horn did sound so shrill.
 In feasting and sporting they spent the day,
 'Till Phœbus sunk into the deep,
 Then each one to his quarters hy'd,
 His guard there for to keep.
 They had not been long in the green wood,
 But Robin he soon espy'd,
 A beautiful damsel all alone,
 That on a black palfrey did ride.
 Her riding suit was of a noble hue black,
 Cyprus over her face,
 Through which her rose-like cheeks did blush,
 All with a comely grace.
 Come tell me the cause, thou pretty damsel,
 Quoth Robin, and tell me right,
 From whence thou comest, and whither thou go'st,
 All in this mournful plight ?
 From London I came, the damsel reply'd,
 From London upon the Thames,
 Which city is, O grief to tell !
 Besieged with foreign arms,
 By the proud prince of Arragon,
 Who swears by his martial band,
 To have the princess to his spouse,
 Or else to waste this land ;
 Except such champions can be found,
 That dare fight three to three,

Against the prince and giants twain,
Most horrid for to see;

Whose grisly looks, and eyes like brands,
Strike terror where they come,
With serpents hissing on their helms,
Instead of feathered plume.

The princess shall be the victor's prize,
The king hath vow'd and said;
And he that shall the conquest win,
Shall have her to his bride.

Now are four damsels sent abroad,
To east, west, north, and south,
To try whose fortune is so good,
To find these champions out.

But all in vain we've sought about,
For none so bold there are,
Who dare adventure life and blood,
To free a lady fair.

When is the day? quoth Robin Hood,
Tell me this and I ask no more.
On midsummer next, the damsel said,
Which is June the twenty-four.

With that the tears trickled down her cheeks,
And silent was her tongue;
With sighs and sobs she took her leave,
And away her palfrey sprung.

The news struck Robin to the heart,
He fell down on the grass,
His actions and his troubl'd mind,
Show'd how perplexed he was.

Where lies your grief? quoth Will Scarlet,
O master! tell to me:
If the damsel's eyes have pierc'd your heart,
I'll fetch her back to thee.

Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,
She does not cause my smart;
But 'tis the poor distress'd princess,
That wounds me to the heart.

I'll fight the giants so fierce and so grim,
To set the lady free—

By the faith of my body ! quoth Little John,
But I'll bear thy company.

Must I stay behind ? quoth Will Scarlet
No, no, that must not be ;
I'll make the third man in the fight,
So we shall be three to three.

These words cheer'd Robin to the heart,
Joy shone upon his face,
Within his arms he hugg'd them both,
And kindly them did embrace.

Quoth he, We'll put on motley grey,
And long staves in our hands,
A scrip and bottle by our sides,
As though come from holy lands.

So may we pass along the highway,
None will ask from whence we came :
But take us pilgrims for to be,
Or some other holy men.

Now they are on their journey gone,
As fast as they may sped,
Yet, for all their haste, ere they arriv'd,
The princess forth was led,

To be deliver'd to the prince,
Who in the list did stand,
Prepared to fight, or else receive,
The lady by the hand.

With that he walk'd about the lists,
With giants by his side ;
Bring forth, quoth he, your champions,
Or bring me forth my bride.

This is the four-and-twentieth day,
The day prefix'd upon ;
Bring forth my bride, or London burns,
I swear by Alcoran.

Then cries the king and queen likewise,
Both weeping as they spake,
Lo ! we have brought our daughter dear,
Whom we are forc'd to forsake.

With that stept out bold Robin Hood,
Cries, My liege, it must not be so ;

Such beauty as the fair princess,
Is not for a tyrant's mow.

The prince, he then began to storm,
Cries, Fool, fanatic, baboon !
For dare thou stop my valour's prize,
I'll kill thee with a frown.

Thou tyrant, Turk, thou infidel,
Thus Robin began to reply ;
Thy frowns I scorn : lo ! here's my gage,
And thus I thee defy.

And for those two Goliaths there,
That stand on either side,
Here are two little Davids by,
That can soon tame their pride.

The trumpets began to sound a charge,
Each singled out his man ;
Their arms in pieces soon were hew'd,
Blood sprang from every vein.

The prince reach'd Robin Hood a blow,
He struck with might and main,
Which made him reel about the field,
As though he had been slain.

God ha' mercy ! quoth Robin, for that blow,
The quarrel shall soon be try'd ;
This stroke shall show a full divorce
Betwixt thee and thy bride.

So from his shoulders he cut his head,
Which on the ground did fall,
And grumbled sore at Robin Hood,
To be so dealt withal.

The giants then began to rage
To see their prince lay dead ;
Thou wilt be next, said Little John,
Unless thou guard thy head.

With that his falchion he whirl'd about,
It was both keen and sharp ;
He clave the giant to the belt,
And cut in twain his heart.

Will Scarlet well had play'd his part,
The giant he had brought to his knee ;

Quoth Will, The devil cannot break his fast,
Unless he has you all three.

So with his falchion he run him through,
A deep and ghastly wound,
Who writh'd and foam'd, curs'd and blasphem'd,
And then fell to the ground.

Now all the lists with shouts were fill'd,
The skies they did resound,
Which brought the princess to herself,
Who had fall'n into a swoon.

The king and queen, and princess fair,
Came walking to the place,
And gave the champions many thanks,
And did them further grace.

Tell me, quoth the king, whence you are,
That thus disguised came,
Whose valour speaks, that noble blood
Doth run through every vein.

A boon, a boon, quoth Robin Hood,
On my knees I beg and crave :
By my crown, quoth the king, your boon I grant ;
Ask it, and thou shalt have.

Then pardon I beg for my merry men all,
Which are in the green wood,
For Little John, and Will Scarlet,
And for me, bold Robin Hood.

Art thou Robin Hood ? quoth the king,
For the valour thou hast shown,
Your pardon I do freely grant,
And welcome every one.

The princess I promised the victor's prize,
She cannot have you all three :
She shall choose, quoth Robin—said Little John,
Then little share falls to me.

Then did the princess view all three,
With a comely, lovely grace,
And took Will Scarlet by the hand,
Saying, Here I make my choice.

With that a noble lord stept forth,
Of Maxwell earl was he,

Who look'd Will Scarlet in the face,
And wept most bitterly.

Quoth he, I had a son like thee,
Whom I lov'd wondrous well,
But he is gone, or rather dead—
His name is young Gamwell.

Then did Will Scarlet fall on his knees,
Crying, Father! father! here,
Here kneels your son, your young Gamwell,
You said you lov'd so dear.

But, Lord! what hugging and kissing were there,
When all the friends were met!
They are gone to the wedding, and then to the
bedding,
And so I bid you good night.



Little John and the four Beggars.

All you that delight for to spend some time
A merry song for to sing,
Unto me draw near, and you shall hear,
How Little John went a begging.

As Robin Hood walked the forest along,
And all his yeomanry,
Robin said, Some of you must a begging go,
And, Little John, it must be thee.

Says John, If I must a begging go,
I will have a palmer's weed,

With a staff and a coat, and bags of all sort,
The better then I shall speed.

Come, now give me a bag for my bread,
And another for my cheese,
And one for a penny, if I get any,
That nothing I may leese.

Now Little John he is a begging gone,
Seeking for some relief,
But of all the beggars he met on the way,
Little John he was the chief.

But as he was walking himself alone,
Four beggars he chanc'd to 'spy,
Some deaf, some blind, some came behind,
Says John, Here's a brave company.

Good morrow, says John, my brethren dear,
Good fortune I had you to see.
Which way do you go? pray let me know,
For I want some company.

But what is here to do? said Little John;
Why ring all these bells? said he;
What dog is hanging? come, let us be ganging,
That we the truth may see.

Here is no dog dead, one of them said,
Good fellow, I tell unto thee: [bread,
But here is one in his stead, who will give you no
No, nor even one single penny.

We have brethren in London, another said,
So we have in Coventry,
In Berwick and Dover, and all the world over,
But never a carl like thee.

Therefore stand back, thou ill-looking calf,
And take that knock on the crown.
Nay, says Little John, I will not begone,
For a bout I will have of you round.

Now have at you all, said Little John,
Since you be so full of your blows;
Fight on all four, and never give o'er,
Whether you be friends or foes.

John nipp'd the dumb, and made him to roar,
And the blind that could not see;

And he that a cripple had been for seven years,
He made him run faster than he.

And flinging them all against the wall,
With many a sturdy bang,
It made John to sing, to hear the gold ring,
And against the walls cry twang.

Then he got out of the beggars' cloaks
Three hundred pounds in gold ;
Good fortune had I, said Little John,
Such a sight for to behold.

And found he in the beggar's bag,
Full three hundred pounds and three ;
If I drink water while this doth last,
Then an ill death may I die.

And my begging trade I will now give o'er,
My fortune hath been so good,
Therefore, I'll not stay, but I will away,
To the forest of merry Sherwood.

And when to the forest so merry he came,
He quickly there did see
Bold Robin Hood, his master good,
And all his company.

What news ? what news ? said Robin Hood,
Come, Little John, tell unto me ;
How thou hast sped with thy beggar's trade ?
For that I fain would see.

No news, but good, said Little John,
With begging full well I have sped ;
Three hundred and three I have for thee,
In silver and gold so red.

Then Robin Hood took Little John by the hand,
And danced round the oak tree ;
If we drink water while this doth last,
Then an ill death may we die.

So to conclude my merry new song,
All you that delight to sing,
'Tis of Robin Hood, that archer good,
And how Little John went begging.



Robin Hood and the Ranger.

When Phœbus had melted the sickles of ice,
And likewise the mountains of snow,
Bold Robin Hood he would ramble the wood,
To frolic abroad with his bow.

He left all his merry men waiting behind,
Whilst through the green valleys he pass'd,
Where he did behold a forester bold,
Who cry'd out, Friend, whither so fast ?

I am going, quoth Robin, to kill a fat buck
For me and my merry men all ;
Besides, ere I go, I'll have a fat doe,
Or else it shall cost me a fall.

You'd best have a care, said the forester then,
For these are his majesty's deer ;
Before you shall shoot, the thing I'll dispute,
For I am head forester here.

These thirteen long summers, said Robin, I'm sure,
My arrows I here have let fly,
Where freely I range—methinks it is strange
You should have more power than I.

This forest, quoth Robin, I think is my own,
And so are the nimble deer too ;
Therefore I declare and solemnly swear,
I'll not be affronted by you.

The forester he had a long quarter staff,
Likewise a broad sword by his side ;
Without more ado, he presently drew,
Declaring the truth should be try'd.

Bold Robin Hood had a sword of the best,
And ere he would take any wrong,
His courage was flush, he'd venture a brush,
And thus they went to it ding dong.

The very first blow the forester gave,
He made his broad weapon cry twang :
'Twas on Robin's head, he fell down for dead,
O that was a terrible bang !

But Robin he soon recover'd himself,
And bravely fell to it again ;
The very next stroke their weapons they broke,
Yet never a man was slain.

At quarter-staff then they resolved to play,
Because they would have t' other bout ;
And brave Robin Hood right valiantly stood,
Unwilling he was to give out.

At length in a rage the bold forester grew,
And cudgell'd bold Robin so sore,
That he could not stand, so shaking his hand,
He said, Let us freely give o'er.

Thou art a brave fellow, I needs must confess,
I never knew any so good ;
Thou art fit to be a yeoman for me,
And range in the merry green wood.

I'll give thee this ring as a token of love,
For bravely thou hast play'd thy part :
The man that can fight, in him I delight,
And love him with all my whole heart.

Then Robin Hood setting his horn to his mouth,
His blast he merrily blows :
His yeomen did hear, and straight did appear,
A hundred with sturdy long bows.

Lo ! these are my yeomen, says Robin Hood,
Thou shalt be one of the train ;
A mantle and bow, and quiver also,
I give them whom I entertain.

The forester willingly enter'd the list,
They were such a beautiful sight ;
Then with a long bow they shot a fat doe,
And made a rich supper at night.

What singing and dancing was in the green wood,
For the joy of another new mate ;
With might and delight they spent all the night,
And liv'd at a plentiful rate.

Then Robin Hood gave him a mantle of green,
Broad arrows, and curious long bow ;
This done, the next day, so gallant and gay,
He marched them all on a row.

Quoth he, My bold yeomen, be true to your trust,
And then we may range the woods wide ;
They all did declare, and solemnly swear,
They'd conquer or die by his side.

Robin Hood and Little John.

When Robin Hood was twenty years old,
He happen'd to meet John Little,
A jolly brisk blade, right fit for the trade,
Who at no small thing would stickle.

Though he was call'd Little, his limbs were large,
And his stature was seven feet high ;
Wherever he came they quak'd at his name,
For soon he would make them fly.

How they came acquainted I'll tell you in brief,
If you will but listen awhile,
For this very jest, among all the rest,
I think may cause you to smile.

For Robin Hood said to his jolly bowmen,
Pray tarry you here in this grove,
And see that you all observe well my call,
While through the forest I rove.

We have had no sport these fourteen long days,
Therefore now abroad will I go ;
Now should I be beat, and cannot retreat,
My horn I will presently blow.

Then did he shake hands with his merry men all,
And bid them at present good bye ;

Then as near the brook his journey he took,
A stranger he chanc'd to espy.

They happen'd to meet on a long narrow bridge,
And neither of them would give way,
Quoth bold Robin Hood, and sturdily stood,
I'll show you right Nottingham play.

Thou talk'st like a coward, the stranger reply'd,
Well arm'd with a long bow you stand,
To shoot at my breast, while I, I protest,
Have nought but a staff in my hand.

The name of a coward, quoth Robin, I scorn,
Therefore my long bow I'll lay by,
And now for thy sake, a staff I will take,
The truth of thy manhood to try.

Then Robin Hood stept to a thicket of trees,
And chose him a staff of good oak ;
Now this being done, away he did run
To the stranger and merrily spoke :

Lo ! see my staff is lusty and rough,
Now here on this bridge we will play ;
Whoever falls in, the other shall win
The battle, and so we'll away.

With all my heart, the stranger reply'd,
I scorn in the least to give out ;
This said, they fell to it, without more dispute,
And their staffs they did flourish about.

At first Robin Hood gave the stranger a bang,
So hard that it made his bones ring ;
The stranger he said, This must be repaid,
I'll give you as good as you bring.

So long as I'm able to handle a staff,
To die in your debt, friend, I scorn :
Then to it both goes, and follow their blows,
As if they had been thrashing of corn.

The stranger gave Robin a crack on the crown,
Which caused the blood to appear ;
Then Robin enrag'd, more fiercely engag'd,
And follow'd his blows more severe.

So thick and so fast he did lay it on him,
With a passionate fury and ire ;

At every stroke he made him to smoke,
As if he had been all on fire.

O then in a fury the stranger he grew,
And gave him a terrible look,
And with it a blow, which laid him full low,
And tumbled him into the brook.

I prithee, good fellow, where art thou now ?
The stranger in laughter he cry'd ;
Quoth bold Robin Hood, Good faith, in the flood,
And floating along with the tide.

I needs must acknowledge, thou art a brave soul,
With thee I'll no longer contend,
For I needs must say, thou hast got the day,
Our battle shall be at an end.

Then unto the bank he did presently wade,
And pull'd himself out by a thorn ;
Which done, at the last, he blew a loud blast,
Straightway on his fine bugle horn.

The echo of it thro' the valleys did ring,
At which his stout bowmen appear'd,
All clothed in green, most gay to be seen,
So up to their master they steer'd.

O what is the matter ? quoth Will Stutely,
Good master, you're wet to the skin :
No matter, quoth he, the lad that you see,
In fighting hath tumbled me in.

He shan't go scot free, the other reply'd ;
So straight they were seizing him there,
To duck him likewise, but Robin Hood cries,
He is a stout fellow, forbear.

There's no one shall wrong thee, friend, be not
These bowmen upon me do wait : [afraid,
There's threescore and nine—if thou wilt be mine,
Thou shalt have my livery straight,

And other accoutrements fitting also,
Speak up, jolly blade, never fear ;
I'll teach you also the use of the bow,
To shoot at the fat fallow deer.

O here is my hand, the stranger reply'd,
I'll serve you with all my heart ;

My name is John Little, a man of good mettle,
Ne'er doubt me, for I'll play my part.

His name shall be altered, quoth Will Stutely,
And I will his godfather be ;

Prepare then a feast, and none of the least,
For we will be merry, quoth he.

They presently fetched him a brace of fat does,
With humming strong liquor likewise,
They loved what was good, so in the green wood
This pretty sweet babe they baptis'd.

He was, I must tell you, but seven feet high,
And may be an ell in the waist :

He was a sweet lad—much feasting they had,
Bold Robin the christening grac'd,

With all his bowmen, who stood in a ring,
And were of the Nottingham breed :

Brave Stutely came then, with seven yeomen,
And did in this manner proceed :

This infant was call'd John Little, quoth he,
Which name shall be changed anon ;

The words we'll transpose, so wherever he goes,
His name shall be call'd Little John.

Then Robin he took the pretty sweet babe,
And cloth'd him from top to toe,

In garments of green, most gay to be seen,
And gave him a sturdy long bow.

Thou shalt be an archer as well as the best,
And range in the green wood with us,

Where we'll not want gold or silver, behold,
While bishops have aught in their purse.

We live here like 'squires, or lords of renown,
Without e'er a foot of free land ;

We feast on good cheer, with wine, ale, and beer,
And every thing at our command.

Then music and dancing did finish the day—
At length when the sun waxed low,

Then all the whole train the grove did refrain,
And unto their caves they did go.

And so ever after, as long as they liv'd,
Altho' he was proper and tall,

Yet nevertheless, the truth to express,
Still Little John they did him call.

Robin Hood and the Bishop of Hereford.



Some they will talk of bold Robin Hood,
And some of barons bold ;
But know you how he serv'd the bishop of Hereford,
When he robb'd him of his gold ?

As it befel in merry Barnsdale,
And under the green-wood tree,
The bishop of Hereford was to come by,
With all his company.

Come kill a venison, said bold Robin Hood,
Come kill me a good fat deer ;
The bishop of Hereford here dines to-day,
And he shall pay well for his cheer.

We'll kill a fat ven'son, said bold Robin Hood,
And dress it by the highway side,
And we will watch the bishop narrowly,
Lest some other way he should ride.

Robin Hood dress'd him in shepherd's attire,
With six of his men also ;
And when the bishop of Hereford came by,
They about the fire did go.

O what is the matter ? then said the bishop,
Or for whom do you make this ado ?

Or why do you kill the king's ven'son,
When your company is so few?

We are shepherds, said bold Robin Hood,
And we keep sheep all the year,
And we are dispos'd to be merry this day,
And to eat of the king's fat deer.

You are brave fellows, said the bishop,
And the king of your doings shall know,
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For before the king you shall go.

O pardon! O pardon, said bold Robin Hood,
O pardon, I do thee pray!
For it becomes not your lordship's coat
To take so many lives away.

No pardon, no pardon, says the bishop,
No pardon I thee owe;
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For before the king you shall go.

Then Robin set his back against a tree,
And his foot against a thorn,
And from underneath the shepherd's coat
He pull'd out his bugle horn.

He put the small end into his mouth,
And a loud blast did blow,
When threescore and ten of bold Robin's men,
Came running all in a row.

And making obeisance to bold Robin Hood,
'Twas a comely sight to see.
What is the matter, master, said Little John,
That you blow so hastily?

O here is the bishop of Hereford,
And no pardon we shall have:
Cut off his head, master, said Little John,
And throw him into his grave.

O pardon! O pardon! said the bishop,
O pardon, I thee pray!
For if I had known it had been you,
I'd have gone some other way.

No pardon, no pardon, said Robin Hood,
No pardon I thee owe;

Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For to merry Barnsdale you shall go.

Then Robin took the bishop by the hand,
And led him to merry Barnsdale ;
He made him stay and sup with him that night,
And to drink wine, beer, and ale.

Call in the reckoning, said the bishop,
For I think it grows wondrous high ;
Lend me your purse, master, said Little John,
And I'll tell you bye and bye.

Then Little John took the bishop's cloak,
And spread it upon the ground,
And out of the bishop's portmanteau,
He told three hundred pound.

Here's money enough, master, said Little John,
And a comely sight 'tis to see ;
It makes me in charity with the bishop,
Tho' he heartily loveth not me.

Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,
And he caused the music to play,
And he made the bishop to dance in his boots,
And glad he could so get away.

Robin Hood rescuing the three 'Squires.

Bold Robin Hood ranging the forest all round,
The forest all round ranged he,
O there did he meet a gay lady,
She came weeping along the highway.

Why weep you ? why weep you ? bold Robin said,
What weep you for gold or fee ?
Or do you weep for your maidenhead,
That is taken from your body ?

I weep not for gold, the lady reply'd,
Neither do I weep for fee,
Nor do I weep for my maidenhead,
That is taken from my body.

What weep you for then, said jolly Robin,
I prithee come tell unto me ?
Oh ! I do weep for my three sons,
For they are condemned to die.

What church have they robbed? said jolly Robin,
Or what parish priest have they slain?
What maids have they forc'd against their will,
Or with other men's wives have they lain?

No church have they robbed, this lady reply'd,
Nor parish priest have they slain;
No maids have they forc'd against their will,
Nor with other men's wives have they lain.

What have they done then? said jolly Robin,
Come tell me most speedily.

Oh! it is for killing the king's fallow deer,
That they are condemn'd to die.

Get you home, get you home, said jolly Robin,
Get you home most speedily,
And I will unto fair Nottingham go,
For the sake of the 'squires all three.

Then bold Robin Hood for Nottingham goes,
For Nottingham town goes he,
O there did he meet with a poor beggar man,
He came creeping along the highway.

What news, what news, thou old beggar man,
What news, come tell unto me?
O there's weeping and wailing in Nottingham,
For the death of the 'squires all three.

This beggar man had a coat on his back,
'Twas neither green, yellow, nor red;
Bold Robin Hood thought 'twas no disgrace,
To be in the beggar man's stead.

Come, pull off thy coat, thou old beggar man,
And thou shalt put on mine,
And forty good shillings I'll give thee to boot,
Besides brandy, good beer, ale, and wine.

Bold Robin Hood then unto Nottingham came,
Unto Nottingham town came he;
O there did he meet with great master sheriff,
And likewise the 'squires all three.

One boon, one boon, says jolly Robin,
One boon I beg on my knee,
That as for the death of these three 'squires
Their hangman I may be.

Soon granted, soon granted, says master sheriff,
 Soon granted unto thee;
 And you shall have all their gay clothing,
 Aye, and all their white money.

O, I will have none of their gay clothing,
 Nor none of their white money;
 But I'll have three blasts on my bugle horn,
 That their souls to heaven may flee.

Then Robin Hood mounted the gallows so high,
 Where he blew so loud and shrill,
 'Till a hundred and ten of Robin Hood's men,
 Came marching down the green hill.

Whose men are they, says master sheriff,
 Whose men are they, tell unto me?
 O they are mine, but none of thine,
 And are come for the 'squires all three.

O take them! O take them! said the sheriff,
 O take them along with thee!
 For there's never a man in fair Nottingham,
 Can do the like of thee.



Robin Hood and King Richard.

King Richard hearing of the pranks
 Of Robin Hood and his men,
 He much admir'd, and more desir'd,
 To see both him and them.

Then with a dozen of his lords,
To Nottingham he rode ;
When he came there he made good cheer,
And took up his abode.

He having staid there for some time,
But had no hopes to speed,
He and his lords, with one accord,
They all put on monks' weed.

From Fountain Abbey they did ride,
Down to merry Barnsdale,
Where Robin Hood prepared stood,
All company to assail.

The king was higher than the rest,
And Robin thought he had
An abbot been, whom he had seen,
To rob him he was glad.

He took the king's horse by the head,
Abbot, says he, abide ;
I am bound to rue such knaves as you,
That live in pomp and pride.

But we are messengers from the king,
The king himself did say :
Near to this place his royal grace,
To speak with thee does stay.

God save the king ! said Robin Hood,
And all that wish him well,
He that denies his sovereignty,
I wish he was in hell.

Thyself thou cursed, says the king,
For thou a traitor art.
Nay, but that you are his messenger,
I swear you lie in heart.

For I never hurt any man yet,
That honest is, and true ;
But those who give their minds to live
Upon other men's due.

I never hurt the husbandman,
That use to till the ground ;
Nor spill the blood who range the wood,
To follow hawk or hound.

My chiefest spite to clergy is,
Who in these days bear sway ;
On friars and monks, and their fine spunks,
I make my chiefest prey.

But I am very glad, says Robin Hood,
That I have met you here :
Come, before we end, you shall, my friend,
Taste of our green-wood cheer.

The king he then did marvel much,
And so did all his men ;
They thought with fear, what kind of cheer,
Robin would provide for them.

Robin took the king's horse by the head,
And led him to his tent,
Thou wouldst not be so us'd, quoth he,
But that my king thee sent.

Nay, more than that, quoth Robin Hood,
For good king Richard's sake,
If you had as much gold as e'er I told,
I would not one penny take.

Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,
And a loud blast he did blow,
'Till a hundred and ten of Robin Hood's men,
Came marching all in a row.

And when they came bold Robin before,
Each man did bend his knee ;
O, thought the king, 'tis a gallant thing,
And a seemly sight to see !

Within himself the king did say,
These men of Robin Hood's,
More humble be than mine to me ;
So the court may learn of the woods.

So then they all to dinner went,
Upon a carpet green,
Black, yellow, red, fine mingled,
Most curious to be seen.

Venison and fowls were plenty there,
With fish out of the river,
King Richard swore, on sea and shore,
He never was feasted better.

Then Robin takes a can of ale,
Come, let us now begin,
And every man shall have his can,
Here's a health unto the king!

The king himself drank to the king,
So round about it went;
Two barrels of ale, both stout and stale,
To pledge that health were spent.

And after that a bowl of wine
In his hand took Robin Hood,
Until I die, I'll drink wine, said he,
While I live in the green wood.

Bend all your bows, said Robin Hood,
And with a grey goose-wing,
Such sports now show, as you would do,
In the presence of the king.

They showed such brave archery,
By cleaving sticks and wands,
That the king did say, Such men as they
Live not in many lands.

Well, Robin Hood, says the king,
If I could thy pardon get,
To serve the king in every thing,
Wouldst thou thy mind firm set?

Yes, with all my heart, bold Robin said;
So they flung off their hoods;
To serve the king in every thing,
They swore they'd spend their blood.

For a clergyman was first my bane,
Which makes me hate them all,
But if you will be so kind to me,
Love them again I shall.

I am thy king, thy sovereign king,
That appears before you all.
When Robin saw that it was he,
Straight then he down did fall.

Stand up again, then said the king,
I'll thee thy pardon give;
Stand up, my friends, who can contend,
When I give leave to live?

So they are all gone to Nottingham,
All shouting as they came ;
And when the people them did see,
They thought the king was elain ;
And for that cause the outlaws were come,
To rule all as they list ;
And them to shun, which way to run,
The people did not wist.
The ploughman left the plough in the field,
The smith ran from his shop ;
Old folks also, that scarce could go,
Over their sticks did hop.
The king did soon let them understand,
He had been in the green wood ;
And from that day, for evermore,
He'd forgiven Robin Hood.
When this the people they did hear,
And the truth was known,
They all did sing, God save the king,
Hang care, the town's our own.
What's that Robin Hood ? said the sheriff,
That varlet I do hate ;
Both me and mine he call'd to dine,
And serv'd us all with one plate.
Ho ! ho ! said Robin, I know what you mean,
Come, take your gold again ;
Be friends with me, and I with thee,
And so with every man.
Now, master sheriff, you are paid,
And since you are the beginner,
As well do you give me my due,
For you ne'er paid for that dinner.
But if that it should please the king,
So much your house to grace,
To sup with you, for to speak true,
I know you ne'er was base.
The sheriff could not this gainsay,
For a trick was put upon him ;
A supper was drest, the king was a guest,
But he thought it would have undone him.

They are all gone to London court,
Robin Hood and his train :
He once was there a noble peer,
And now he's there again.

Robin Hood and the Golden Arrow.

When as the sheriff of Nottingham,
Was come with mickle grief,
He talk'd no good of Robin Hood,
That strong and sturdy thief.

So unto London rode he fast,
His losses to unfold,
To king Richard, who did regard,
The tale that he had told.

Why, quoth the king, what shall I do,
Art thou not sheriff for me ?
The law is in force, so take thy course,
Of them that injure thee.

Go, get thee gone, and by thyself
Devise some tricking game,
For to enthrall yon rebels all,
Go take thy course with them.

So away the sheriff he return'd,
And by the way he thought
Of the words of the king, and how the thing
To pass might well be brought.

For within his mind he imagined,
That when such matches were,
Those outlaws stout, without all doubt,
Would be the bowmen there.

So an arrow with a golden head,
And a shaft of silver white,
Who on the day should bear away,
For his own proper right.

Tidings came to bold Robin Hood,
Under the green-wood tree :
Come, prepare you then, my merry men,
We'll go yon sport to see.

With that stept forth a brave young man,
David of Doncaster,

Master, said he, be rul'd by me,
From the green wood we'll not stir.

To tell the truth, I am well inform'd,
Yon match it is a wile,
The sheriff, I wiss, devises this,
Us archers to beguile.

Thou smell'st of a coward, said Robin,
Thy words do not please me;
Come on't what will, I'll try my skill,
At yon brave archery.

O then bespoke brave Little John,
Come let us thither wend;
Come listen to me, how it shall be,
That we need not be ken'd.

Our mantles of Lincoln green
Behind us we will leave;
We'll dress us all so several,
They shall not us perceive.

One shall wear white, another red,
One yellow, another blue;
Thus in disguise, in the exercise,
We'll gang, whatever ensue.

Forth from the green wood they are gone,
With hearts all firm and stout,
Resolving with the sheriff's men,
To have a merry bout.

So they themselves mix'd with the rest,
To prevent all suspicion;
For if they should together hold,
They thought it no discretion.

So the sheriff looking round about,
Amongst eight hundred men,
But could not see the sight that he,
Had long suspected then.

Some said, If Robin Hood was here,
And all his men to boot,
Sure none of them could pass these men,
So bravely did they shoot.

Aye, quoth the sheriff, and scratch'd his head,
I thought he would have been here;

I thought he would, but tho' he's bold,
He durst not now appear.

O that word griev'd Robin Hood to the heart,
He vexed in his blood ;
Ere long, thought he, thou shalt well see,
That here was Robin Hood.

Some cried, Blue jacket, another cried, Brown,
And a third cried, Brave yellow ;
But the fourth man said, Yon man in red,
In this place has no fellow.

For that was Robin Hood himself,
For he was cloth'd in red ;
At every shot the prize he got,
For he shot both sure and dead.

So the arrow with the golden head,
And shaft of silver white,
Brave Robin Hood won, and bore with him,
For his own proper right.

These outlaws there that very day,
To shun all kind of doubt,
By three or four, no less nor more,
As they went in came out.

Until they all assembled were,
Under the green-wood shade,
Where they relate in pleasant sport,
What brave pastime they made.

Says Robin Hood, All my care is,
How that yon sheriff may
Know certainly that it was I
That bore the arrow away.

Says Little John, My counsel good
Did take effect before ;
So therefore now, if you'll allow,
I will advise once more.

Speak on, speak on, said Robin Hood,
Thy wit's both quick and sound ;
Aye, marry ! and as sharp as any
That's in the world to be found.

This I advise, said Little John,
That a letter shall be penn'd ;

And when 'tis done, to Nottingham
You to the sheriff shall send.
That is well advis'd, said Robin Hood,
But how must it be sent?
Pugh! when you please, 'tis done with ease,
Master, be you content.
I'll stick it on my arrow's head,
And shoot it into the town;
The mark must show where it must go,
Wherever it lights down.
The project it was well perform'd,
The sheriff the letter had,
Which when he read he scratch'd his head,
And rav'd like one that's mad.
So we'll leave him, vex'd to the heart,
Which will do him no good;
Now pray attend, and hear the end
Of honest Robin Hood.

The Death of Robin Hood.

When Robin Hood and his merry men all,
Had reigned many years,
The king then was told, they had been too bold
With his bishops and noble peers.
Therefore they call'd a council of state,
To know what was best to be done,
For to quell their pride and set them aside,
Or the land would be over-run.
They then consulted a whole summer's day,
At length this was fully agreed,
That one should be sent to try the event,
And fetch him away with speed.
Therefore a trusty and worthy knight,
The king was pleas'd to call,
Sir William by name, when to him he came,
He told him his pleasure all.
Go from hence to bold Robin Hood,
Bid him without more ado,
Surrender himself, or else the proud elf,
Shall suffer with all his crew.

Take with you a hundred bowmen brave,
Clever, chosen, and men of might,
Of excellent art, for to take thy part,
In glittering armour bright.

Then said the knight, My sovereign liege,
By me they shall be led;
I'll venture my blood against Robin Hood,
And bring him alive or dead.

One hundred men were chosen straight,
Quite proper as ever man saw,
On a midsummer's day they marched away,
To conquer the bold outlaw.

With bows and with spears all proper array'd,
They marched in mickle pride;
And never delayed, or halted, or stayed,
'Till they came to the green-wood side.

Said he to his archers, Tarry here,
Your bows make ready all,
Then, if need should be, you may follow me,
See, you observe my call.

I'll go in person first, he cried,
With the letter of my king,
Both sign'd and seal'd, and if he will yield,
We need not draw one string.

He wandered about, 'till at length he came out,
To the tent of Robin Hood;
The letter he shows, bold Robin arose,
There on his guard he stood.

They'd have me surrender, quoth bold Robin Hood,
And lie at their mercy then;
But tell them from me, that never shall be,
While I have full seven score men.

Sir William the knight, both hardy and bold,
Then offer'd to seize him there;
Which William Locksley, by fortune did see,
And told him that trick to forbear.

Then Robin Hood set his horn to his mouth,
And blew a blast or twain;
So did the knight, at which there in sight,
The archers came all amain.

Sir William, with care, he drew up his men,
And placed them in battle array ;
Bold Robin we find, he was not behind—
Now this was a bloody affray.

The archers on both sides bent their bows,
And clouds of arrows flew ;
The very first flight, that honoured knight
Did there bid the world adieu.

Yet nevertheless the fight did last
From morning 'till almost noon ;
Both parties were stout, and loath to give out—
This was on the first of June.

But at length they went off, one part away
For London with right good will,
And Robin Hood to the green-wood tree,
And there he was taken ill.

He sent for a monk, who let him blood,
And took his life away :
Now this being done, his archers they run,
It was not time to stay.

Some got on board and cross'd the seas,
To Flanders, France, and Spain,
Others to Rome, for fear of their doom,
But soon returned again.

Thus he that ne'er fear'd bow nor spear,
Was murdered by letting of blood—
So loving friends, the story it ends,
Of valiant bold Robin Hood.

There is nothing remains but his epitaph now,
Which reader here you have,
To this very day, which read it you may,
As it was upon his grave.

“Robin, Earl of Huntingdon,
“Lies underneath this marble stone ;
“No archer was ever so good,
“His name it was bold ROBIN HOOD.
“Full thirty years, and something more,
“These northern parts he vexed sore ;
“Such outlaws as he, in any reign,
“May England never see again.”

Take with you a hundred bowmen brave,
Clever, chosen, and men of might,
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SOME ACCOUNT OF ROBIN HOOD.

There is scarce any story so little known, for one so very popular, as that of Robin Hood and Little John; who, as historians assure us, chiefly resided in Yorkshire; but who, if we may give any credit to old songs, committed most of his depredations in the county of Nottingham. Besides Little John he had an hundred bowmen in his retinue. None but the rich stood in awe of him: so far from plundering the poor, he did them all the good that lay in his power. It is not very positively known who he was, but the general opinion of historians is, that he was a nobleman by birth, and created an earl for some considerable service done to his country in war; but having riotously spent his estate, he took to that way of living, rather choosing to venture his life for every thing he got, than to live in a dependant state, and be beholden to any body for his bread. Hubert, archbishop of Canterbury, and chief justice of England, endeavouring all he could to suppress robbers and outlaws, set a very considerable price on the head of Robin Hood, and several stratagems were used to apprehend him; but all their attempts proved fruitless. Force he repelled by force, and art by cunning, till at length falling ill, he went (in order to be taken better care of) to Birkley's, a nunnery in Yorkshire, where he desired to be let blood; but the reward set upon his head being considerable, it proved a great temptation to some who knew him, by whom he was betrayed; and instead of bleeding, as he desired, he was bled to death, about the latter end of 1305.

